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Fort Mississauga, Ontario
(1814-1972)

David Flemming

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by David Flemming

4 Abstract
5 Introduction
10 The Construction of Fort Mississauga (1814-38)
20 Fort Mississauga Garrison (1814-38)
23 "We Stand on Guard" (1839-60)
26 The Twilight Years (1861-1921)
29 An Historic Site (1922-72)
31 A Structural Summary of Fort Mississauga
36 Endnotes
44 Bibliography
51 Illustrations

Abstract

Fort Mississauga was originally built as a temporary field work during the latter stages of the War of 1812. The work itself was not completed in time to take an active role in the hostilities and when the war ended the indecision of military authorities in Upper Canada and in England resulted in its rapid physical deterioration.

On 6 August 1946 Order in Council P.C. 3135 effectively transferred jurisdiction of Fort Mississauga from the Department of National Defence to the Department of Resources and Development (the forerunner to the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs) with permission to develop the site as an historic park. The purpose of this report is to provide the historical background necessary to undertake any on-site interpretation and development.

Submitted for publication 1972, by David Flemming, Parks Canada, Halifax.

Introduction

Fort Mississauga is located on Mississauga Point in the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake at the mouth of the Niagara River. Construction of the fort, an irregular, star-shaped field work, was begun in the spring of 1814; it was never completed. While plans were laid in 1816 to have the work replaced by a massive fortress, this was not done.

The history of the fort will be presented in a chronological manner. Reproductions of pictures and plans with their descriptions and various contemporary observations provide much of the detailed information. For this reason the illustrations and their description should be considered an integral part of this report. The material contained in the chapter "A Structural Summary of Fort Mississauga" is based almost solely on the federal government registry files for Fort Mississauga and deals mostly with structural changes carried out since 1922.

Mississauga Point

Located in the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Mississauga Point is the name given to that portion of land situated at the junction of Lake Ontario and the mouth of the Niagara River. The area was first settled early in the 15th century by a tribe of native people of the Neutral or Attiwandaronk nation. Although there is no evidence that the Neutrals ever established a permanent village on the site, the area was a popular campsite owing to the abundance of fish available near the mouth of the river.

The Neutrals, as their name implies, occupied a position of neutrality between the warring Iroquois and Huron nations. In the late 1640s the Iroquois nations waged war with the Hurons and after defeating them turned against the Neutrals. The fierce warfare that ensued resulted in the near annihilation of the Neutral nation. The lands previously occupied by the Neutrals came under the control of the Senecas, a tribe of the Iroquois nation.

During the latter half of the 17th century the Senecas reached an agreement with the Mississaugas, a tribe of the Chippawa nation which had immigrated to the Niagara Peninsula from the area north of Lake Huron. The Senecas

agreed to occupy the territory to the east of the Niagara River while the Mississaugas settled on the west side. The Mississaugas also settled on the shore of Lake Ontario near the mouth of the Credit River and in the Bay of Quinte region. Mississauga Point at Niagara-on-the-Lake, Mississauga Road in Port Credit, and Mississauga Point near Kingston are legacies of their occupation of these parts.

Like the Neutrals the Mississaugas recognized the importance to fishing of the waters around Mississauga Point, Niagara. The Mississaugas camped in the area now known as the Niagara common and the Fort Mississauga Military Reserve (the Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club). Except for the occasional missionary, the first white man to visit this area was Robert Cavelier Sieur de la Salle who sailed up the Niagara River on 6 December 1678. He established a fur-trading post near what is now Lewiston, New York; however, this was abandoned four years later. In 1687 the Marquis de Denonville established Fort Denonville on the east bank of the mouth of the Niagara River, the present site of Old Fort Niagara. This endeavour lasted only one year.

In 1695 the British concluded a treaty with the Iroquois by which they obtained jurisdiction over a large parcel of land including the Niagara Peninsula. This agreement thwarted any French ambitions in the area until 1725 when construction of Fort Niagara was commenced. Additions were made to the fort in 1730 and again in 1757. Despite all these precautions, in July 1759, a force consisting of 2000 British troops and over 1000 Iroquois led by Brigadier-General John Prideaux captured Fort Niagara. Instrumental in the British offensive was a battery of six guns situated across the river (see Fig. 2) near what is now the foot of King Street, Niagara-on-the-Lake.[1] At that time it was known as Montreal Point; later it was to be called Mississauga Point. Besides the battery the same map also shows a 150 yard by 100 yard plot of "ploughed land." This was no doubt used by the French to provide food for Fort Niagara since it was well recorded during the period that the soil conditions on the west bank of the river were considered superior to those on the east side.[2]

British possession of the area was secured in 1764 when Sir William Johnson, head of the British Indian Department managed to obtain from both the Mississaugas and the Senecas clear title to a strip of land four miles wide (extending two miles on either side of the Niagara River) between lakes Ontario and Erie. Subsequent treaties of 1781, 1784 and 1792 secured the British claim to this area as well as other Mississauga lands on the Niagara Peninsula.

Shortly after their victory of 1759 the British dismantled the Mississauga battery. While they no doubt made use of the cleared land on the west bank, there is no record of any activity in that area until the establishment

of Navy Hall in 1776. Located on or near the same site as the present structure bearing that name, Navy Hall then consisted of at least two buildings and docking facilities and served as the headquarters of the Navy Department or Provincial Marine on Lake Ontario.[3]

The first influx of settlers on the west bank began in 1778 with the construction of Butler's Barracks. The latter served as headquarters for a Loyalist regiment led by Major John Butler, known as Butler's Rangers. The original buildings were located near the present intersection of Ricardo and Wellington Streets, Niagara-on-the-Lake.[4] During the 1780s members of the Rangers settled with their families on the west bank of the river including Mississauga Point. This area was known as Butlersburg or West Niagara, and by 1791 a plan for the town of Lennox (later known as Newark, Niagara, and finally Niagara-on-the-Lake) was drawn up.[5] Governor Simcoe's promises of land and the fact that the town was designated the first capital of Upper Canada in 1791 drew many settlers to the area during the 1790s.

By article seven of the Treaty of Ghent (1783) Britain agreed to abandon its posts on United States territory and to hand them over to the Americans. Fort Niagara was one of these posts. Rather than transfer the posts immediately, the British held on to them until 1796, feeling that the possession of these areas was the best way to prevent an Indian War.[6] During the intervening years, some effort was made to find suitable locations for new frontier posts. The two most obvious locations for a fort to replace Fort Niagara were at Mississauga Point and on the present site of Fort George. In May 1790, Captain John Schank of the Royal Navy observed that while Fort Niagara was ideally situated, "the ground on the opposite shore is...equally high, and the soil better, so that every convenience necessary for a Post could be erected on the British side"[7] (future site of Fort George). The first mention of Mississauga Point as the possible site for a post was made around the same time by Major Robert Mathews who observed that "there is a point of land on our side of the River...equally well situated to command the entrance of it."[8]

The decision to construct a fort on the heights above Navy Hall seems unusual. The location did not command the entrance to the river; neither did it provide any protection for the town of Newark from the guns of Fort Niagara. These weaknesses were recognized by the British when they first planned construction and it was probably because of this that Fort George was never considered more than a defensive field work.[9] That Fort Mississauga was the preferred site is evident in a plan of the area drawn in 1799 by Lieutenant William Hall (see Fig. 3) which shows land set aside on Mississauga Point for a military reserve. Also shown is the trace of a proposed battery containing

positions for 14 guns to be located on what is now the site of Fort Mississauga. There is no evidence that this battery was constructed at this time (1799), although by 1813 there was a small battery located on the point.

Meanwhile, the first lighthouse on the shores of Lake Ontario was built in 1804 at Mississauga Point, the site recommended by the Board of Lighthouse Commissioners, a branch of the government of Upper Canada.[10] The civil contractor for the job was John Symington; however, most of the construction was carried out by the military masons of the 49th Regiment of Foot.[11] The lighthouse (see Figs. 4 and 20) stood until 1814 at which time it was dismantled to make way for the construction of Fort Mississauga. During the ten years it was in operation there was only one lighthouse keeper, Dominic Henry. Many years later, Henry's daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Quade recalled:

> I saw the first sods dug that were used in the building of that fort. The lighthouse stood on the ground where the old tower now stands, our dwelling house also stood near the lighthouse...after the war the lighthouse was torn down and the tower built from the stone and bricks from the ruins of the town and lighthouse.[12]

Mrs. Quade's recollection of the lighthouse location is at variance with a plan of Fort Mississauga made in July 1814 (see Fig. 5) which shows the lighthouse located not on the site of the tower but on the glacis of the work close to the lake shore. Although the 1814 plan is more reliable archaeological investigation would be needed to find the exact location.

The strategic importance of Mississauga Point in the defense of the frontier did not go unnoticed during the early months of the War of 1812. The British and Canadian victory at Queenston Heights in October 1812 successfully thwarted any American hopes of establishing a bridgehead on the west bank of the Niagara River. It also gave the British a much needed opportunity to prepare for the expected spring offensive by the Americans in 1813. The importance of fortifying Mississauga Point was expressed by Lt.-Col. R.H. Bruyeres of the Royal Engineers in February 1813: "a Tower or Small Redoubt to command the entrance of the River is essentially necessary to be erected on Mississauga Point."[13]

On 25 May 1813 American guns started a heavy bombardment of Fort George causing extensive damage. The following morning a large force of nearly 6,000 American regulars and militiamen landed at Mississauga Point. Despite Bruyeres' earlier recommendation the Point was defended by a small battery consisting of one 24-pounder and one nine-pound cannon only.[14] This paltry defence was soon overcome by the guns of the American vessels the Julia

and Growler. The area within a two- or three-mile radius of Fort George was occupied by the Americans until December when they withdrew across the river. Before they left however, they completely razed the town of Niagara and reduced some of the works at Fort George.

The American invasion had demonstrated the strategic importance of Mississauga Point. In order to prevent a recurrence of the invasion the British realized that a strong defensive work would have to be constructed on the site. Almost before the last American had crossed the river in December, plans were afoot to do just that.

The Construction of Fort Mississauga (1814-38)

The proven vulnerability of the British grip on the west bank of the Niagara River was stressed in December 1813 by Sir George Prevost, governor of Lower Canada, who echoed Bruyeres' remarks of ten months before:

> The line of defence towards the Lake appears to me to require...attention at Mississauga Point, a Tower within a strong Redoubt I consider so essentially necessary to co-operate with Fort Niagara in the defence of the River and in the event of the destruction of Fort Niagara it would command the entrance to it.[1]

Lieutenant General Gordon Drummond, president and administrator of Upper Canada and Prevost's second in command agreed with his superior and further suggested that the defenses of the recently captured Fort Niagara should be weakened leaving any fortification on Mississauga Point in full control of the entrance to the river.[2]

By March 1814 no action had yet been taken to fortify Mississauga Point due to the "excessively severe" weather.[3] Lieutenant-Colonel R.H. Bruyeres, commanding Royal Engineer in Upper Canada informed Lieutenant Frederic de Gaugreben, Royal Engineer at Niagara that:

> Missisaquai Point must be Fortified and occupied with every possible dispatch. Also the Works at Fort George to be repaired, and an intermediate Battery between Fort George and Missisaquai Point to be established....These are essential positions to be occupied with strong batteries to act against the opposite shore.[4]

Bruyeres was no doubt worried that when the American spring offensive was launched the British would find themselves in a position similar to that of a year before.

By 13 April work on the "Mississauga Battery" had progressed to the point where it was hoped that the following week would witness the mounting of four guns.[5] A plan of the work at Fort Mississauga dated 29 July 1814 (see Fig. 5) showed an irregular star-shaped earthwork containing a stone tower (then only about two feet high); a nearly completed splinter-proof barracks for 80 men; two hot shot furnaces; four 24-pounders on traversing carriages

(facing the lake); two bomb-proof powder magazines; the earthworks, and the lighthouse. The ramparts were also said to be enclosed with "oak pickets ten or twelve feet above the ground."[6]

Throughout May and June American marauders had carried out numerous raids into Canadian territory all along the Niagara frontier. Major General Phineas Riall, Drummond's second-in-command refused to commit the bulk of his force to repel these raids preferring instead to wait until he was certain the main American invasion was taking place. On 2 July British and Canadian troop strength at Fort Niagara and at the several posts along the west bank of the Niagara from Fort George to Fort Erie stood at just over 2,000.[7] Another 1,500 were waiting in reserve at Burlington and York.

In the early morning of 3 July, Major-General Jacob Brown led a force of over 6,000 American troops and Indians across the Niagara River in the vicinity of Fort Erie. After taking Fort Erie they marched on to Chippawa where, two days later they were attacked by a force of 1,800 regulars, militia and Indians led by Riall. Riall's force suffered heavy losses in the ensuing battle. When more American troops crossed the river, Riall withdrew to await reinforcements and to avoid being surrounded. He deployed his forces to Fort Niagara, Fort George and Fort Mississauga to await the American onslaught, then went to Burlington to ready the reserve.

A series of questions and answers appended by Riall to his 12 July report to Drummond demonstrated the precarious hold the British had in the area. The questions were answered by four young officers, two members of the Royal Artillery and two Royal Engineers and their replies revealed that little had been done over the previous seven months to strengthen the fortifications in the area:

> Fort George is in a very bad State with regard to its Works...[and] is capable of making little or no resistance against an Army....Fort Mississauga is in such a State as not to be easily taken by Assault, but its interior is so open that the Garrison will be incapable of holding out long after the Enemy may be enabled to commence a Bombardment against it.[8]

The key to the defense of the area seems to have been Fort George. As the defense of Fort Niagara depended on British possession of Fort George, so too the security of Fort Mississauga depended on British occupation of Fort Niagara. If Fort George alone were to be overcome, Fort Mississauga would not be immediately threatened; however should Fort Niagara also fall Mississauga would be seriously weakened and "would soon fall if attacked only from the Land and its resistance would of course be considerably diminished by the co-operation of an enemy fleet."[9]

The British did not have to wait long to test the opinions of their engineers. On 7 July, Brown's army had advanced on Queenston and began fortifying the heights. Eight days later, a brigade led by Colonel Moses Porter (estimated by Lieutenant-Colonel John Tucker, the commander of the British force at Fort George, as numbering "not less than three thousand men")[10] advanced on St. David's and then came along the lake shore to "examine the works" at the mouth of the river.[11] According to Tucker the American advance was nothing short of a major attack, although Porter seemed to consider it merely as a reconnaisance mission.[12] That same evening the American force withdrew to Queenston. His force reduced by sickness and casualties, Brown was forced, on 24 July, to fall further back to Chippawa to await fresh troops and supplies.[13]

Riall siezed the opportunity and immediately advanced on Chippawa and the next morning took up a position along Lundy's Lane. The ensuing bloody battle resulted in the Americans withdrawing to Fort Erie where they remained until November, despite a seven week siege by Drummond's force. On 5 November, the Americans destroyed Fort Erie and crossed the river to take up winter quarters in Buffalo, thus ending the 1814 campaign on the Niagara frontier.

Throughout the campaign of 1814, Fort Mississauga was never more than an incomplete field work. By the end of July the tower had risen to the limited height of two feet and the earthworks were far from complete. This delay was caused by the indecision over what to do with Fort Niagara, then held by the British. The latter was the source of much discussion between Drummond and Riall, the former wanting a large troop concentration at Fort Niagara, while Riall favoured a reduction of both the troop strength and the work itself.[14] Drummond's views were implemented and for the rest of the war Fort Niagara was strongly garrisoned and only minor portions of the work were demolished by the British. In March 1815, Fort Niagara was returned to the Americans almost intact.

The significance of the role of Fort Mississauga during the War of 1812 is questionable. The earthworks had been quickly thrown up during the spring and summer of 1814 and by the end of the war the tower was not even near completion. Strategically, the site was more important than the work itself. This was especially true during 1814 when the British also controlled Fort Niagara. Without the latter, Mississauga Point would have required a heavily fortified work to successfully defend the west bank of the Niagara River. It is extremely doubtful whether the presence of Fort Mississauga deterred Brown from attacking Fort George in July 1814. If he had been able to obtain the support of the American fleet and if his force had been in good health, he likely would have attacked. Under those circumstances, Fort George would almost surely have fallen.

The end of the war early in 1815 prompted an order from Lieutenant-General Drummond that construction of most fortifications and public buildings in Upper Canada be stopped. Among the posts exempted from this command were forts George and Mississauga where he felt it necessary to provide better accommodations for the troops.[15]

That Mississauga Point was to continue to play a key role in the defense of Upper Canada was made evident by Lieutenant-Colonel Gustavus Nicolls, R.E., who recommended that since the Fort George site:

> is much inferior to that at Mississauga Point ...that what should further be done should be to level the old works to the southward and eastward and to secure it from assault, without going to any great expense, and that the labour bestowed at the mouth of the River Niagara should be chiefly in erecting a permanent fort in the place of the Field Work at Mississauga Point and with this view, I have, according to my Instructions submitted to Lieut. General Drummond, that the Bastions of a Work for 1000 men should be commenced in the Spring in preference to going on with the reform of Fort George.[16]

Nicolls felt that construction of the new fort could be carried on without disturbing the existing field work and that the latter would be levelled when the new structure was completed.

Nicolls' plan for the new fortification (see Fig. 6) was drawn up in May 1816. About ten times the size of the existing work, the Vauban-style fortress was to consist of five bastions with connecting curtains and two ravelins. Parts of the existing work, which by May 1816 contained the tower (still not completed) and five other structures including the nearly completed barracks shown in the July 1814 plan, were to be incorporated into the new fortress.[17] Indeed, Nicolls' proposed trace was so large that the entire field work was able to be contained in the large lakefront bastion.

Nicolls also recommended that should the plan be adopted:

> the Town of Newark should not be rebuilt, or at least the People inclined to build there should be made acquainted that they not only run the risk of having their Town destroyed by the enemy but that in the event of an attack on the Fort it would be requisite to do it on our part.[18]

During the autumn of 1815 a ploughed trace of the proposed work was made on the site. Although Drummond wholeheartedly approved of the plan it was decided that work would proceed slowly due to a scarcity of men and materials. By the end

of the year the ploughed trace was the only evidence that a new work was to be constructed on the site.[19]

Meanwhile work on the existing fortifiction proceeded slowly, hampered by the indecision of the senior military officers and the shortage of building materials. Despite these drawbacks four wooden barracks buildings were constructed in the fort between July 1814 and the autumn of 1815. The dearth of bricks for use in construction of the tower and the powder magazine proved frustrating to Lieutenant George Phillpotts, the Royal Engineer in charge at Niagara. In June 1815 he sought advice from Nicolls on how the townsfolk were to be compensated for

> the chimnies and walls which have been taken down by the Engineers Department at this post for the sake of the bricks and stone contained in them at a time when neither of these materials could possibly be obtained elsewhere.[20]

He also complained of delays in obtaining salaries for the artificers involved in construction of the work.

The lack of building materials was alleviated somewhat in July when Major-General Sir F.P. Robinson ordered 250,000 bricks, 714 roofing tiles and 20,000 feet of pine timber sent to Niagara.[21] By the time the order was passed down the chain of command however, it was discovered that "the one providing for 250,000 bricks immediately cannot be complied with until the spring."[22] Phillpotts stressed the urgency in obtaining the bricks:

> The nature of the building is such that if it be not completed this year it will either be entirely ruined or so much impaired by the rain and frost as to require almost one half of it to be taken down and rebuilt in the spring. The Arch will be commenced today and unless we cover it before the winter we shall be obliged to take it all down and rebuild it again in the spring.[23]

By December the roof had still yet to be covered, and by April 1816 the walls of the tower had only risen to a height of nine feet above ground level (see Fig. 7).

On Christmas day, 1815, a frustrated and unhappy Lieutenant-Colonel G. Macdonnell, a militia officer and commander of Fort George, submitted a description of the fortifictions under his command.[24] Despite being in "bad health and spirits" Macdonnell has left one of the most complete (and critical) accounts of the posts under his command. "Mississauga Redoubt" was described as a temporary field work containing a roofless bomb-proof brick tower, wooden splinter-proof barracks buildings "without cover for more than two hundred Men" and containing four guns mounted en barbette. In commenting on the plans for a new permanent fortification he observed:

> every additional Spade put into the ground when the Weather will again admit of it (For the work has long been discontinued) will only tend to obstruct the defenses of the Mississaga Redoubt, which I conceive to be our Citadel, tho' it is only an unfinished Field Work[25]

It was estimated that even if enough men and materials were available it would still require at least three years to complete the permanent fortification proposed by Nicolls.

Macdonnell's views did not differ greatly from those of Lieutenant-Colonel E. Durnford of the Royal Engineers who, on 28 July 1816, began an inspection tour of all the military installations in Upper and Lower Canada. In his report filed later that year he stated that Fort George was in such a deplorable condition as to warrant its being levelled "as soon as cover for the Troops can be established."[26] He recommended that "the plan of my predecessor [Lieutenant-Colonel Nicolls; see Fig. 6] should be immediately commenced" at Mississauga Point, and that land in the town near the glacis of the fort be obtained by the military to prevent civilian construction from being carried out in the area.[27] Durnford described the field work at Mississauga Point as:

> small...thrown up very suddenly and is very irregular in its figure, a Tower has lately been erected in the Centre of the Parade to strengthen it against a sudden assault. The Officers and Troops are very badly accomodated in temporary huts in either Work and the Magazines, Carriage Sheds and Artillery Stores are equally bad and very inadequate to the vast importance of the Station.[28]

As alternatives to Nicoll's scheme, Durnford submitted two plans for fortifications at Mississauga Point. One plan consisted of a pentagonal trace containing five bastions, one on each corner and another towards the lakefront. The other was a square with a ravelin on the lakefront. In the latter plan he incorporated the existing tower within the ravelin.

Despite the numerous recommendations, a visitor to Niagara in September 1817 described Fort Mississauga as being merely "a strong little fort with a block tower in the centre."[29] A year later however, estimates were submitted outlining work required at Fort Mississauga. Captain Henry Vavasour, R.E. submitted a detailed list of man-days, materials and money required to "repair the Barracks at this Post."[30] It was estimated that a total of £3000 would be necessary

> towards the construction of a building to serve as Barracks, Messroom, Kitchens, Guard rooms, and Store rooms for the Commissariat, Store Keeper General and Barrack Departments.[31]

It is doubtful whether this work was ever carried out since one year later the same Vavasour wrote that the barracks at Fort Mississauga were

> of a most temporary construction, and all of them requiring more repairs to render them in any degree comfortable than the buildings are worth, as the logs composing them are much decayed.[32]

He further submitted estimates for labour and materials amounting to £589/15/0 to erect a cooking house, privy, two sentry boxes, ordnance store and gun shed, and to repair the officers' and mens' barracks.[33] This work likewise was never carried out.

One of the most comprehensive reports on the state of fortifications in Upper and Lower Canada was compiled by Lieutenant-Colonel E.W. Durnford, R.E. in September 1823. His report on Fort Mississauga (see Figs. 9 to 13) described seven buildings within the work, six of which were noted on Nicolls' plan of May 1816 (see Fig. 6). The other structure, the officers' quarters located outside the earthworks, was added between 1816 and 1823. Of the seven structures all six of the wooden buildings were described as being "in very bad repair" and except for the officers' quarters which was "not worth more than temporary repairs," all were considered "not worth repairing." The tower on the other hand was described as being "in excellent repair." He described the earthworks of the fort as being "nearly in ruins" and that "the work is of a description not worthy of repairs."[34]

It is surprising that Durnford's report contains no indication that any work had been done on the much touted permanent fortification which had been recommended for Mississauga Point as early as 1814. For all practical purposes the only changes wrought at Fort Mississauga between May 1816 and September 1823 were the completion of the tower, the construction of the officers' quarters (which by the latter date had deteriorated to the point where it was barely worth repairing), and the further deterioration of the earthworks and the other five buildings in the fort. All the proposals for establishing a large permanent fortification on the site had never advanced beyond the planning stage.

By 1825, it was clear that Fort Mississauga was not to play a role in the defense of Upper Canada. In that year a report on the defenses of British North America was prepared for the Duke of Wellington by a commission headed by Sir James Carmichael Smyth. Among the twelve locations suggested for the establishment or strengthening of large fortifications was the Niagara Peninsula. The Smyth commission recommended the destruction of the five existing works along the Niagara frontier: Fort Mississauga, Fort

George, Queenston Heights, Chippawa and Fort Erie. The commissioner pointed out:

> As they are all of them in a perfect state of ruin, neither defensible, nor the buildings habitable, with the exception of that at Mississauga; the subject is open for fresh arrangements, and such work or works may be constructed as Your Grace may think proper to approve, after weighing maturely the best system of defence adapted for this Frontier.[35]

The report also contains a description of Fort Mississauga:

> Fort Mississauga is an Earthen Redoubt on the Point forming the left of the mouth of the Niagara River. Within it is a Tower of Masonry, two Storeys high, having the lower one arched and bomb proof. There are several log huts within the Fort in very bad condition, capable of containing 120 men. The soldiers can literally not stand upright in them. There is a wooden building without the Fort formerly an Officer's Quarters now used by the Non-Commissioned Officers of Artillery not worth repairing. There is a small magazine in the Ramparts of the Fort, but very much out of order, and unfit for the reception of powder.[36]

The commissioners went on to recommend the construction of a massive fortification on a point of high ground 15 miles west of Fort Mississauga in Pelham Township, known as the Short Hills. They felt that such a work would be preferable to the five scattered along the bank of the Niagara since it would effectively prevent American occupation of the district in the event of an attack.

The report of the Smyth commission and the resulting plan for the Short Hills work put to rest (for a while) any plans to construct a permanent fortification on Mississauga Point. Through 1826-27 Colonel Durnford drew up detailed plans for the Short Hills work and in the latter year the Crown purchased two lots in the area. Nothing more was done, however, and the scheme, like so many others proposed by the British military for British North America, was eventually put to rest.

An inspection carried out in 1830 by Lieutenant-Colonel Durnford showed that few improvements had been made at Fort Mississauga since he had submitted his last report seven years before.[37] His description of the tower (reproduced with Fig. 13) is most interesting since it mentions the existence of "a Platform for guns" on the roof. While a plan of April 1816 (see Fig. 7) had shown a firing step proposed for the tower, a plan of 1823 (see Fig. 13) shows only "a light roof thrown over the tower for

protection." The latter evidence would seem to indicate that the tower was yet to be completed in 1823. An 1838 plan (see Fig. 16) described a "Plan and Section on Top of Tower for taking Guns." Built 6.5 feet above the "old flooring" this platform consisted of 12-inch timbers from wall to wall, raised to within two feet, three inches of the edge of the parapet. While in the 1830 description there seems to have been a gun platform and a roof, by 1838 the platform also served as a roof. An on-site inspection could probably determine whether the gun platform followed the 1816 or 1838 plan.

Descriptions of the fort left by other visitors support the findings of the official reports. An engineer's report of 1834 lists the tower and the artillery barracks located outside the main gate as the only buildings not "in ruins."[38] Edward Thomas Coke described a visit to Fort Mississauga in 1832 and lamented that the work was "in a still more mouldering state" and that it was "rapidly crumbling into dust."[39] Anna Brownell Jameson's observations of 1837 echo those of Coke:

> The opposite shore, about a quarter of a mile off, is the State of New York. The Americans have a fort on their side, and we also have a fort on ours. What the amount of their garrison may be I know not, but our force consists of three privates and a corporal with adequate arms and ammunition, i.e. rusty firelocks and damaged guns. The fortress itself I mistook for a dilapidated brewery. This is charming - it looks like peace and security at all events.[40]

Fort Mississauga's role during the rebellion of 1837 was negligible. There is no evidence that the fort was occupied during this period; however, it is likely that a small force of militiamen from Niagara was garrisoned there. After his defeat at Montgomery's Tavern, Mackenzie fled to the United States where he found much sympathy for his plan to invade Upper Canada. This threat resulted in some activity at Fort Mississauga.

In 1838 "a company of Sappers and Miners" was employed in renovating the fort.[41] It is impossible to determine the complete extent of the work although reports of engineers for the following 20 years made little mention of the wooden buildings being inhabitable as had been the case up to that time. A ravelin was built opposite the main gate and included within it was the building known in Durnford's report as "the Officers' Quarters outside Fort Mississauga" (see Figs. 9 and 11). Engineer's plans of 1838 also suggest that some work was done on the pallisades, the gate, the bridge over the dry ditch, and the tower (see Figs. 15 through 18).

By 1839 the last work on Fort Mississauga had been completed. Begun early in 1814 as a temporary field work, major construction was completed by 1823. The 1838 activity had resulted in the construction of a ravelin with a small trestle bridge across its south ditch and a drawbridge over the ditch at the main entrance. It is also likely that some repairs were made to the existing structures at this time. Elaborate plans to build a massive fortification on the site were not carried out; however, land on Mississauga Point was obtained in order to create a sizeable military reserve.[42]

Fort Mississauga Garrison (1814-38)

In any consideration of the Fort Mississauga garrison a distinction must be made between the garrison "at" Fort Mississauga and the garrison "in" Fort Mississauga. While in the former instance the force could number over 2,500, the latter was limited to about 140.

Since Fort Mississauga was only meant to be a minor field work, a precursor of a massive fortification to be built on the site, the barrack accommodations were limited. Of the six wooden buildings in the fort in 1823, only one, the officers' quarters, had been constructed on a stone foundation. Indeed, it was freely admitted that the barrack accommodation at Fort Mississauga was "of a most temporary construction," a fact that did not go unnoticed by the men who lived in them.[1] An engineer's report on the state of the barracks in November 1819 noted that

> the log huts occupied by the Soldiers are considered by the medical officers as the principal cause of the intermittent fevers.[2]

Less than four years after their construction the wooden buildings (constructed between July 1814 and December 1815) were said to be "much decayed."[3] This is understandable considering they were thrown up quickly, probably during the urgent conditions of August - September 1814. By late 1815 the tower had yet to be completed and the engineers at the site were sending urgent requests for more materials. Especially required were timbers for scaffolding, pine boards for the roof and bricks for the walls.[4]

Even if the barrack accommodations had been in good condition (which they were not) there was room for a maximum of 140 officers and men.[5] Since the space within earthworks excluding that taken up by the buildings was so limited, it is not probable that many of the troops were quartered under canvas within the fort. Therefore any estimate of troop strength <u>in</u> Fort Mississauga numbering over 200 must be said to have included troops quartered outside the works, <u>at</u> Fort Mississauga.

A return listing the number of troops "at Fort Mississauga" on 8 July 1814, one week before Porter's raid

on the area, showed a total strength of 2,740 officers, men, sick and wounded.[6] Among those regiments with a large number of men were the 1st Royal Scots with 983, the 8th Regiment with 598, the 100th Regiment with 417, the Incorporated Militia with 379 and the Royal Artillery with 178.[7] These along with troops from six other regiments occupied Mississauga Point during one of the most crucial periods of the war. By the end of July when the threat of invasion had lifted there were only 400 officers and men posted "in Fort Mississauga."[8] The last available return for the war years, dated 8 November 1814 showed a total of 291 rank and file of the Royal Artillery Regiment and the 90th Regiment "at Fort Mississauga."[9]

For the eight years following the war Fort George continued to be the headquarters for the forces in Upper Canada. The returns for the era are scattered but from those that exist there seem to have been between 375 and 425 officers and men garrisoned at "Fort George Headquarters" at any one time. Besides the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers the bulk of the force between 1818 and 1822 was made up of the 70th Regiment (July 1818-May 1819) and the 68th Regiment (June 1819-April 1822). With the transfer of military headquarters to York in 1822 and the establishment of the new Butler's Barracks complex, troops were not regularly stationed at Fort Mississauga until the appearance of the Royal Canadian Rifles in the 1840s.

Of the above totals it is not possible to ascertain how many were billeted in Fort Mississauga. From the various unfavourable descriptions of the premises it is doubtful that there were many. In the Smyth commission report of September 1825 the "log huts within the Fort" were described as being "in very bad condition."[10] The ones without stone foundations were said to be so sunken that "the soldiers can literally not stand upright in them." Throughout the 1820s Fort Mississauga was the site of the annual muster of the 1st Regiment, Lincoln Militia, and a visitor to the site in 1832 noted that the fort was inhabited by members of the 79th Highlanders.[11] A summary of militia strength in Upper Canada during that year showed a total of four officers and 108 rank and file available to the 1st Lincoln.[12]

During the late 1820s when British defence policy in Upper Canada underwent a change, it had been decided that the prime line of defence would run along the Montreal, Kingston, Ottawa axis. The construction of the Rideau Canal reflected this thinking. Fort Mississauga's role in this scheme was merely to provide a military presence in the Niagara Peninsula. Fort Malden, located at Amherstburg served a similar purpose on Lake Erie.

In 1838 Fort Mississauga continued to be of some importance in the defence of the Niagara Peninsula. In the event of hostilities, the 1st Lincoln Militia Regiment was

to muster at Fort Mississauga. Except for Fort Malden it was in the best condition of all the forts in the area. The main problem lay not so much in the deterioration of the work but in the fact that the Niagara Peninsula was considered dispensible in the event of a major attack from the United States. For this reason it ceased to be a key location for the garrisoning of troops, the Butler's Barracks complex, located conveniently beyond the range of the guns of Fort Niagara, was now to provide a military presence in the area.

"We Stand on Guard" (1839-60)

During the 20 years following the rebellion in Upper Canada, Fort Mississauga continued to be garrisoned on a limited and sporadic basis. Despite the renovations of 1838, activities at Fort Mississauga did not seem to increase. By 1840 there was still a detachment of regular artillery at the fort,[1] and a barrack return of October 1841 showed 3 subalterns, one staff sargeant and 141 NCOs and privates garrisoned there.[2]

In 1840 the War Office had decided on the formation of a special regiment which would be utilized at posts near the United States border. This was brought about by the recurring problem of troops deserting to the United States. Formed entirely from volunteers, membership in this regiment, known as the Royal Canadian Rifle Regiment, was limited to officers and men from the 19 regiments then serving in British North America who had completed a minimum of 15 years service in the army.[3] As an added incentive members of the regiment were to be permitted to work out of barracks for two or three days a week and, upon retiring, could take up government land at a reduced rate.

During the early 1840s a company of the Royal Canadian Rifles was posted to Niagara. Their presence in the town no doubt gave the inhabitants some sense of security. One group of visitors from Prescott was especially impressed with Fort Mississauga:

> In outward appearance the building is not attractive and is far from being so imposing as Fort Niagara on the American side of the River, but it is strongly built, and compartments, ramifications and embrasures of the outworks, are multifarious and complete and could not have been constructed without an Enormous expense.[4]

The writer goes on to describe the presence in the fort of "a company of the Royal Canadian Rifle Regiment...with the detachment of artillery." The fort was well armed at the time, containing "mortars, howitzers and pieces of cannon of various calibre" and a "large pile of balls, and shells of different sizes." He concluded that "all is ready for active warfare at a Moment's Notice."

The above description varies somewhat with the impressions of Sir Richard H. Bonnycastle who visited Niagara at about the same time. According to him the RCRs were quartered "on a large plain," probably in the Butler's Barracks complex. His description of Fort Mississauga is interesting:

> Fort Mississauga, with its square tower, looks frowningly at Fort Niagara, on the American side of the estuary of the Great River. I never see these rival batteries, for it is too magniloquent to style them fortresses, but they picture to my mind England and the United States. Mississauga looks careless and confident, with a little bit of a flag - the flag, however, of a thousand years, displayed, only on Sundays and holidays, on a staff which looks something like that which the king-making Warwick tied his heraldic bear to. The antiquity and warlike renown of England sit equally and visibly impressed on the crest of the miserable Mississauga as on that of Gibraltar.[5]

Bonnycastle's is a very emotional if not accurate view of the defensive capabilities of Fort Mississauga.

During their 13 years at Niagara the RCRs played a not unimportant role in the life of the community. Many of the officers and enlisted men lived in the town with their families, and the census of 1851 listed a total of 253 RCRs, many with families, living either in barracks or in the town itself.[6] Demonstrations of military skills, band concerts and picnics provided opportunities for the public to mingle with the troops on an affable basis. Unlike most military towns Niagara did not seem to be plagued by unrest between the military and civilian population.

In 1855 members of the RCRs and the 100th Regiment who were stationed at Niagara volunteered for service in the Crimea. By November of that year the garrison at Fort Mississauga consisted of "25 men and 1 subaltern of the Royal Canadian Rifle Regiment."[7] These were replaced before the end of the year by "21 Pensioners" and two NCOs.[8] Arriving in England too late to take part in the war, the RCR company returned to Canada and was immediately sent to Fort Garry. When the regiment was disbanded in 1870, many of the pensioners returned to Niagara where they settled with their families.

In July 1856 a captain in the Royal Engineers stationed at Kingston, W. Hatt Noble, undertook a study of the defenses of the Province of Canada. His "military memoir" contains a detailed study of the military capabilities of the United States and Britain along the border between Canada and the United States.[9] His recommendations are similar to those contained in the report of the Smyth

commission in that both documents were based on the premise that Upper Canada was defensible. He recommended implementation of the Short Hills scheme for the defence of the Niagara area. His report included a detailed description of Fort Mississauga (see Fig. 24) which provides some information on the armaments of the fort. He listed the total barrack accommodation within the fort at 149 officers and men.

After the departure of the RCRs Fort Mississauga seems to have ceased being garrisoned by regular troops. The fort was disarmed shortly after 1856 and except for being occupied by various volunteer militia companies in early 1864 and prior to the Fenian raid on Ridgeway in July 1866, it seems to have rarely if ever been garrisoned on a regular basis.

The Twilight Years (1861-1921)

Fort Mississauga was officially abandoned by the military sometime during the early 1860s, and for the next fifty years it served mainly as either a rallying point for patriotic events or merely a place for quiet contemplation. When Benson Lossing visited Fort Mississauga in August 1860 he found it inhabited by one Patrick Burns and his family (see Figs. 25 and 26). Four years later a Captain R. Harrison of the Royal Engineers noted that while the fort could accommodate 56 men it was at that time occupied by nine men and nine women.[1] In January and February 1865 the Barrie Rifles, a company of the 2nd Battalion of the Canadian Volunteer Militia, occupied Fort Mississauga in anticipation of a Fenian attack from the United States. Charles Hunter, a member of that company has left an excellent description :

> Fort Mississauga was at that time in good defensive condition, the Palisades that surrounded the Fort including the outside kitchens were intact, as was also the high breakwater guarding the water front. The old double gate was solid and strong, while the Fort built in 1814 showed no signs of decay, and easily accomodated some 20 of our men in its two vault like rooms....The roof was at that time open, cannon mounted in each corner, with shot ready for use, the walls running up five feet on all sides for protection of the gunners. These walls are very wide and during sunny days in spring were the great lounging place for the men, but only when officers were away as it was strictly forbidden. Our barracks rooms were not so large as at "Butlers" but stronger, being made bomb-proof by layers of square cedar logs.[2]

The company moved out of the fort on 1 March when the battalion was disbanded. Another volunteer company, the No. 1 Company, Niagara Volunteer Militia, briefly occupied the fort during another Fenian scare in July 1866.

In 1862 another military commission was set up to report on the defense of Canada. Presided over by Colonel

J.W. Gordon, the commission presented its report to Lieutenant-Colonel W.F.D. Jervois. The Gordon commission recommended among other things the establishment of strong fortifications at Fort Erie, Fort Mississauga and Short Hills. For Fort Mississauga it recommended the removal of the existing work and its replacement by a "respectable work" mounting 20 guns and having accommodations for 500 men, all for the grand sum of £35,000.[3] Jervois, however, decided that in the event of an American attack the Niagara Peninsula was indefensible and that the recommended construction should not be undertaken. This was the last time that Fort Mississauga was ever considered in connection with the defence of Canada.

In December 1866 Fort Mississauga was officially transferred to the Department of Militia with a number of other ordnance properties. Three years later it came under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Department of Defence and in 1870 it ceased being considered a military work.

Throughout the next fifty years the works at Fort Mississauga deteriorated rapidly. By the late 1870s (see Fig. 28) the picketing around the ramparts was falling and the tower and wooden buildings were begining to look weathered. The first available photographs of the fort (see Figs. 31 and 33) indicate that large portions of the facing of the tower had fallen off. The interior of the tower was supposedly severely damaged by fire during the early 1880s. At about the same time all the wooden buildings in the fort were dismantled and most of the surviving pickets making up the breakwater and the outer fraising were hauled away for firewood.[4] A picture drawn in the late 1880s (see Fig. 32) shows sheep grazing within the earthworks. Another 1890 picture (see Fig. 35) shows members of a highland regiment camped in the fort.

During the first decade of this century a roof with dormer windows was constructed on the tower to protect it from further deterioration (see Fig. 36). By 1896 it was estimated that due to the destruction of the breakwater the bank was being cut away by the lake waters at the rate of two feet per year.[5] In 1915 the walls of the tower were repaired by the addition of a cement or stucco parging. The work was carried out by the 2nd Field Company, Canadian Engineers who were stationed at Niagara prior to embarking for the war front in Europe.[6]

In the late 1870s a nine-hole golf course was laid out on Mississauga Point. This course was used until the 1890s when play was restricted to an 18-hole course at the Fort George military reserve. In 1905 a second golf club was formed by a group connected with the Queen's Royal Hotel, a popular Niagara summer resort. This club used the Mississauga course. Seven years later the two clubs merged to form the Niagara Golf Club and play was limited to the Mississauga course.[7] Part of the course included the

ramparts and the interior of Fort Mississauga (see Fig. 36).

Throughout this entire period Fort Mississauga continued to waste away. Periodically a letter to an editor or an article in a magazine would point out this 'national disgrace' and demand government action to restore the fort. In 1920 a proposal was presented to the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada urging that Fort Mississauga be established as a national historic site. Finally, on 31 March 1922 the Board recommended that since Fort George and Fort Mississauga were "of National importance" they should receive some attention "in the way of preservation and restoration."[8]

An Historic Site (1922-72)

It is not within the scope of this report to deal with the various schemes and plans proposed for Fort Mississauga by various government departments responsible for the fort over the past fifty years. Suffice it to say that except for the further deterioration of the fort, little has changed on Mississauga Point since 1922. By the late 1920s bricks were already reported falling from the top of the tower with such frequency that some residents of the town became concerned for the safety of golfers in the area of the second green.

On 17 September 1931 an Historic Sites and Monuments Board plaque affixed to the southwest wall of the tower was unveiled commemorating the fort (see Fig. 42 for a copy of the text). In May 1924 the golf club signed an agreement with the Department of National Defence which formally recognized their right to use the Fort Mississauga Military Reserve as a golf course. A more specific agreement was signed on 1 May 1946 between the Department of Defence and the golf club.

On 1 July 1934 the Niagara Parks Commission leased forts George and Mississauga from the Department of National Defence for a term of 99 years. The golf club sub-leased from the Niagara Parks Commission. On 6 August 1947 an Order in Council transferred the Fort Mississauga Military Reserve from the Department of National Defence to the Department of Resources and Development (later the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development). The Niagara Parks Commission and the golf club continued their arrangements with the new owners; the Niagara Parks Commission terminated its interest in the early 1960s. The Niagara Golf Club continues to exercise its rights under an agreement with the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Over the past 50 years, numerous reports on the condition of the fort have recommended swift action to prevent further deterioration. In 1934-35 a stone sea wall was built by the Niagara Parks Commission (under the terms of their lease) in an attempt to prevent further erosion of the works by the waters of Lake Ontario. In 1946 the roof of the tower was destroyed by fire and six years later some of the remaining interior woodwork of the tower was

torn out by vandals. A 1953 report described vandalism to the wooden flooring, sills, joists, and rafters, as well as the serious weathering of the outer brick wall and the parging. At that time the two magazines and the sally port were said to be "in quite good condition."

By 1960 the main gates had fallen off their hinges and were removed for storage. For a time a picket fence was built around the tower to prevent injury to golfers from falling bricks (see Fig. 40). This was replaced a few years later by a Frost link fence with barbed wire along the top. In 1963 vandals pried open the doors on the tower and the two magazines and further damaged the interior of the tower.

In 1963, 159 years after the construction of the first lighthouse on Mississauga Point, the Department of Transport erected a pole with a flashing light on top on the shore below the fort as an aid to navigation.

In 1966 the then Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Arthur Laing, announced the government's decision to create a national historic park at Fort Mississauga, with development scheduled to commence in 1970. As such development would require the removal of the golf club from the Mississauga site, that organization was given notice to vacate the Mississauga course by 31 March 1970. As of September 1972 the golf club is still using the Mississauga course and no site development has yet taken place. Meanwhile, the walls of the tower continue to deteriorate, the outside wing wall of the sally port is threatened by the soil under it being washed away, and visitors to the fort are required to keep a wary eye for golf balls either approaching the second green or being driven from the eighth tee.

A Structural Summary of Fort Mississauga

Except for the "tower," all the names of buildings used as headings in this chapter are those found in an 1852 plan of Fort Mississauga (see Fig. 19). The term "martello tower" used in the 1852 plan is not an accurate description.

Tower

Construction of this square brick bomb-proof vaulted tower with rounded corners was begun in 1814. By 1823 it had been completed except for a timber platform which was added to the top in 1838 for mounting guns en barbette.

The tower measures 50 feet square by 25 feet high; the walls are eight feet thick at the base sloping to seven feet at the parapet. The basement contains two rooms, each approximately 35 feet by 16 feet. One was used for stores while the other served as an expense magazine for the battery on the roof (after 1838). The main floor consists of two vaulted barracks rooms also 35 feet by 16 feet. A temporary roof covered the tower in 1823 but in 1838 the timber platform for mounting guns replaced it.

During the late 1840s a plaster or stucco parging was applied to the outer brick wall. By the 1880s most of the parging had fallen off and early in that decade the wooden interior and the roof of the tower were badly damaged by fire. Around 1905 a roof with dormer windows was constructed to protect the top of the tower and it is also likely that the timbers inside were repaired at this time. In 1915 a new cement parging was applied to the outer walls. In 1946 the roof was destroyed by fire and six years later vandals removed much of the timber interior. Today, the walls are in bad condition; the parging applied in 1915 is nearly gone and much of the brick work, especially around the top of the outer facing, has fallen off. The interior woodwork is in even worse condition.

For further details see Figures 5, 7, 10, 13, 15, 16, 19, 25-29, 31-38, 40-44.

Canteen and Barracks

Build between April 1816 and 1819 as an officer's quarters,

this was the only building of frame construction in the fort. It measured 55 feet by 20 feet and 12 feet to the wall plate. It was also the only wooden structure built on a stone foundation which possibly accounts for the fact that by 1823 it was not in quite as bad condition as the other structures. The building also contained an attached room, 22 feet by 16 feet which was originally used as a kitchen.

By 1834 it was used as an artillery barracks and in 1842 a canteen. It stood outside the earthworks of the fort until 1838 when it was encompassed by a ravelin. It was dismantled during the early 1880s.

For further details see Figures 9, 11, 14, 19, 26.

Barracks

Built between July 1814 and December 1815, this log building without a foundation originally served as a soldiers' barracks, and solitary cells. The structure measured 61 feet by 16 feet by 7 feet to the wall plate. The lowness of the wall plate and the fact that the building had no foundation soon made it impossible for the occupants to stand upright in it.

By 1823 it was said to be infested with vermin and was not considered worth repairing. Some repairs were likely made during the 1830s and by 1840 it was used as a guardhouse and staff sergeant's quarters. It was dismantled in the early 1880s.

For further information see Figures 9, 11, 14, 19, 23, 25, 27, 28.

Cook House

This log building without a foundation was constructed between July 1814 and December 1815 and was originally used as a guardhouse. It measured 32 feet by 17 feet by 7 feet to the wall plate and by 1823 was not considered worth repairing.

Some repairs were probably made around 1838 and by 1842 it was being used as a soldiers' barracks. It too was dismantled during the early 1880s.

For futher information see Figures 9, 11, 14, 19, 23, 25, 27, 28.

Officers' Quarters

This was a log building without a foundation built between July 1814 and December 1815 for use as a soldiers' barracks. It measured 50 feet by 17 feet by 7 feet to the wall plate and by 1823 was not considered worth repairing. Repairs were likely made in 1838 and the building was dismantled during the early 1880s.

For further information see Figures 9, 12, 14, 19, 22, 23, 25, 27-29, 31, 36, 38.

Barracks

Built in the spring and summer of 1814 as a barracks this was the oldest building in the fort. A log structure without a foundation, it measured 63 feet by 17 feet by 7 feet to the wall plate. In 1823 it was not considered worth repairing but in 1838 some repairs were likely made. It was dismantled during the early 1880s.

For further information see Figures 5, 6, 9, 12, 14, 19, 23, 27-29, 31, 36, 38.

Soldiers' Barracks

Another log structure without a foundation, this one was also built between July 1814 and December 1815. It measured 100 feet by 17 feet by 7 feet to the wall plate and it too was not considered worth repairing in 1823. Although some repairs were likely made in 1838, it was also dismantled during the early 1880s.

For further information see Figures 6, 9, 12, 14, 19, 22, 28, 29, 38.

Engineers' Stores

No plans exist for this building and only two partial photographs. It seems to have been of a similar construction to the other log structures and was likely built during the late 1830s or early 1840s. It was dismantled during the early 1880s.

For further information see Figures 23 and 25.

Artillery Stores

This building first appeared on an 1851 plan. It was likely dismantled during the early 1880s.

Earthworks

Construction of this irregular star-shaped work was begun in 1814 and finally ceased in the late 1830s. The star-shaped trace was not popular with military strategists since it was difficult to defend and it took up much of the interior space of a work. However, it was popular with many engineers when faced with limited time and materials to defend a given location. The latter was surely the case with Fort Mississauga. It should also be kept in mind that this work was only intended to be of a temporary nature, and was to be dismantled when the larger and more permanent

fortification was built. Unfortunately the latter never materialized.

By 1823 the parapet of Fort Mississauga was approximately 10 feet high and 20 feet thick (see Figs. 9, 10). The exterior slope of the rampart was held in place by vertical cedar posts 10 to 12 feet high, while the slopes of the ditch and glacis had no revetment whatsoever. By 1838 there were two lines of picketing four to nine feet high on the berm which was about four feet lower than the terreplein of the fort (see Fig. 17). The inner row of pickets was positioned vertically in the ground with the outer row at a 45 degree angle. The rampart was at that time about 40 feet thick and 12 feet at its highest point. It was quite irregular and contained no real terreplein for mounting guns.

When constructed in 1814, the re-entering angle facing the southwest was replaced by a curtain where the main entrance was located. In 1838 a ravelin was constructed opposite the entrance with a bridge across the ditch on its south side. A drawbridge was built over the ditch at the main entrance between the terreplein of the fort and the ravelin, and a new gate was constructed.

The original wooden sally port on the north side of the work was replaced by a brick one during the 1840s. The two brick magazines on either side of the main entrance date from 1814.

By 1870 much of the picketing had begun to fall into decay. Photographs show that all the pickets and posts had disappeared by the turn of the century. The lake has eroded much of the glacis on the north side; most of the soil under the outer wing wall of the sally port has been washed away.

For further information on the earthworks see Figures 9, 10, 17, 18, 22, 23, 25-30, 32, 34-44.

Armaments

Information on the armaments of Fort Mississauga is sketchy. Throughout the 1820s and 1830s, there seem to have been two batteries, the upper and the lower. The upper was located on a platform on top of the tower while the lower was on platforms mounted en barbette in the salients. All the information on the armaments is listed below in chronological order:

July 1814	Lower battery - four 24-pounders on traversing carriages mounted en barbette and facing towards the lake.
December 1815	Same as July 1814.
August 1836	Two 18-pound cannonades, neither of which were mounted.
1848 and 1856	Lower battery - six 24-pound cannon, two 18-pound cannonades, one 8-inch Howitzer.

Mounted close to the tower probably on the terreplein were two 8-inch mortars and two 10-inch mortars.

For further information see Figures 5, 22, 24.

Endnotes

Introduction

A French map of the period, "Plan de l'Attaque du Fort de Niagara..." (PAC, Map Division, D950 - Fort Niagara - 1756), shows that of the six guns in the battery, three were trained on the flagstaff bastion, two on the gate bastion and one on the commandant's quarters. The guns were mounted during the evening of 16 July and throughout the next two days caused no small amount of damage to the French defenses. It was this battery that hastened the fall of Niagara by preventing the schooner Iroquoise from landing its cargo at the beleaguered fort. F.H. Severance, An Old Frontier of New France: The Niagara Region and Adjacent Lakes Under French Control (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1917), p. 309.

2 Canada. Public Archives. (hereafter cited as PAC), MG11, CO42, 'Q' Series, Vol. 49, p. 291, Capt. John Schank, R.N., "Account of the Posts in Canada," 31 May 1790.

3 For a detailed study of Navy Hall see: David Flemming, Navy Hall, Niagara-on-the-Lake (1775-1969). Manuscript on file, National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, Parks Canada, Ottawa, 1969.

4 For a detailed study of Butler's Barracks see: Robert Allen, A History of the First Butler's Barracks. Manuscript on file, National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, Parks Canada, Ottawa, 1969.

5 A detailed study of the early settlement at Niagara-on-the-Lake can be found in: David Flemming, A History of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake (1791-1970). Manuscript Report Series No. 25. Parks Canada, Ottawa, 1971.

6 Malcolm MacLeod, "Fortress Ontario or Forlorn Hope? Simcoe and the Defence of Upper Canada," Canadian Historical Review, Vol. 53, No. 2 (June 1972), p. 150.

7 PAC, MG11, CO42, 'Q' Series, Capt. John Schank, R.N., loc. cit.

8 PAC, MG11, CO42, Vol. 72, p. 209, Robert Mathews to Even Nepean, Plymouth Barracks, 9 July 1790.

9 PAC, MG13, WO55, Vol. 1551(b), p. 57, Gother Mann

Report, 29 Oct. 1792.
10 PAC, RG1, E1, State Book C, Upper Canada, fols. 350-1.
11 PAC, RG8, I, A1, Vol. 923, pp. 42-3.
12 Janet Carnochan, "Recollections of Mrs. Elizabeth Quade, nee Henry," Niagara Historical Society Records (hereafter cited as NHSR), Vol. 11 (1903), p. 11.
13 PAC, RG8, I, A1, Vol. 378, p. 17, Bruyeres to Sir George Prevost, Kingston, 13 Feb. 1813.
14 For a detailed description of the American attack on Fort George see: Ernest A. Cruikshank, "The Battle of Fort George," NHSR, Vol. 12 (1904), pp. 5-35. Once the Americans had established a beach head on Mississauga Point they were able to advance on Fort George by using the town as cover. The defenders were unable to bring their artillery to bear on the invaders for fear of causig high casualties among the population of Niagara.

Construction of Fort Mississauga (1814-38)
1 PAC, RG8, I, A2, Vol. 1222, p. 10, Prevost to Lt. Gen. Gordon Drummond, Quebec, 29 Dec. 1813.
2 PAC, RG8, I, A1, Vol. 682, p. 18, Drummond to Prevost, York, 9 Jan. 1814.
3 PAC, RG8, I, A1, Vol. 682, p. 204, Drummond to Prevost, York, 15 March 1814.
4 PAC, MG13, WO40, Bundle 32, Bruyeres to Gaugreben, Quebec, 9 March 1814.
5 PAC, RG8, I, A1, Vol. 683, pp. 30-3, Drummond to Prevost, 13 April, 1814.
6 Janet Carnochan, "Rev. John McEwan," NHSR, Vol. 11 (1903), p. 14.
7 J. MacKay Hitsman, The Incredible War of 1812; A Military History (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), p. 194.
8 PAC, RG8, I, A1, Vol. 388, pp. 148-51, "Questions Proposed to the Officers of Artillery and Engineers concerning Forts George, Niagara and Mississauga, 12th July 1814."
9 Loc. cit.
10 PAC, RG8, I, A1, Vol. 684, pp. 129-32, Tucker to Riall, Fort Mississauga, 15 July 1814.
11 Ernest A. Cruikshank, ed. A Documentary History of the Campaign on the Niagara Frontier in the Years 1812-1814 (Welland: Lundy's Lane Historical Society, 1908), Vol. 8, p. 68.
12 When Brown withdrew from Queenston Heights one week later his field force consisted of 2,644 effectives. It would therefore seem that Tucker's estimate that Porter's force was "over 3000" was more than slightly exaggerated. That the advnce ws only a reconnaisance mission would seem to be borne out by the fact that Brown had made it perfectly clear that he had no

intention of attacking Fort George until he could be assured of the co-operation of the fleet. At that time Chauncey's fleet was still shut up in Sackett's Harbour. Consisting of only "one Brigade," Porter's force may have included up to 1,000 men - a far cry from Tucker's estimate of 3,000.

13 There is little doubt that had the American naval force been in a position off the mouth of the Niagara between 13 and 24 July 1814, Brown would have launched an attack. In this case the artillery stationed at the newly begun earthwork at Mississauga Point would probably have been hard pressed to provide a cross fire with Fort George against Brown's army. The fact that such a situation did not materialize raises the question whether Fort Mississauga can be considered to have been a deterrent. On the evidence available it would seem that the defence of the area depended more on the fact that the British controlled forts Niagara, George and Mississauga during the month of July 1814 than on the strength (or lack of it) of any one of the three forts.

14 PAC, RG8, I, A1, Vol. 683, p. 204, Drummond to Prevost, York, 15 March 1814. In January Drummond had recommended the weakening of Fort Niagara. By this time however he felt that a strong force at Fort Niagara would create a diversion, causing the Americans to split their forces, and that it would also afford protection for British ships anchored in the river. Drummond seemed to base his ideas on the anticipation of a two-pronged American attack directed against forts Erie and Niagara. Riall, on the other hand, sought to have Fort Niagara reduced, leaving only the northeast bastion occupied. This would require no more than 120 men as well as a few pieces of artillery, thus leaving the balance of the force to take part in offensive action. Drummond, the more defensive-minded of the two, felt that if Riall's plan were adopted Fort Niagara would fall in less than a day, leaving the British left flank vulnerable and the harbour unsafe for the fleet.

15 PAC, RG8, I, A1, Vol. 687, pp. 182-3, Drummond to Prevost, York, 11 March 1815.

16 PAC, RG8, I, A1, Vol. 389, pp. 26-31, "Report on the Defence of the Niagara Frontier," Lt.-Col. Nicolls, Fort George, 5 Feb. 1815.

17 The five buildings within the fieldwork in May 1816 (see Fig. 6) are similar to those found in Durnford's plan of 1823 (see Fig. 9).

18 PAC, RG8, I, A1, Vol. 389, pp. 103-5, Nicolls to Drummond, Quebec, 30 May 1815.

19 PAC, RG8, I, A1, Vol. 393, pp. 59-61, Lt.-Col. G. Macdonnell to Major General de Watteville, Fort George, 25 Dec. 1815.

20 PAC, RG8, I, A1, Vol. 389, pp. 177-80, Phillpotts to

Nicolls, Fort George, 13 June 1815. This would seem to give credence to the widely held view that the tower at Fort Mississauga was built, at least in part, with the bricks taken from the ruins of the houses destroyed by the Americans in December 1813. The fact that the tower was not completed until at least 1818 seems to indicate that there were not sufficient bricks available from the ruins of the town to complete the job. In his letter to Nicolls, Phillpotts also mentioned that many of the townsfolk were holding him responsible for cutting down "all the orchards in the Town of Niagara" and destroying all the buildings which could have provided cover for the enemy in July 1814.

21 PAC, RG8, I, Al, Vol. 391, p. 134, report of Phillpotts, Fort George, 6 Oct. 1815. All of these materials were ordered "for the purpose of erecting the tower at Fort Mississauga pursuant to an order from Major General Sir F.P. Robinson."

22 PAC, RG8, I, Al, Vol. 391, p. 138, Engineer's Dept. requisitions, 12 Oct. 1815.

23 PAC, RG8, I, Al, Vol. 391, p. 113, Phillpotts to Major Peter de Haren, Fort George, 9 Oct. 1815.

24 PAC, RG8, I, Al, Vol. 393, pp. 59-61, Macdonnell to de Watteville, Fort George, 25 Dec. 1815.

25 Ibid. It is interesting to note that Macdonnell's gloomy report did not go over well with his superiors. Nicolls described him as being "either incapable of performing his duties or extremely inattentive to it [sic]." (PAC, RG8, I, Al, Vol. 393, p. 159, Nicolls to Major Foster, Quebec, 29 Feb. 1816.) In fairness to Macdonnell he did admit in his report that he felt the responsibilities thrust upon him (a militia officer) were beyond his capabilities.

26 PAC, RG8, II, Vol. 13, p. 10, "Report on the State of the Fortifications and Military Buildings in Upper and Lower Canada....," Quebec, 20 March 1816.

27 He suggested that the land within an 800-yard radius of the proposed work be secured for this purpose.

28 PAC, RG8, II, Vol. 13, p. 10.

29 Janet Carnochan, "Reminiscences of Niagara." NHSR, Vol. 11 (1903), p. 40.

30 PAC, RG8, I, Al, Vol. 401, pp. 20, 26-7, 99c.

31 PAC, RG8, I, Al, Vol. 401, p. 99c.

32 PAC, RG8, I, Al, Vol. 404, p. 174, Vavasour's report, Fort George, 24 Nov. 1819.

33 PAC, RG8, I, Al, Vol. 406, p. 2, Vavasour's estimates, Quebec, 4 Jan. 1820.

34 PAC, RG8, II, Vol. 80, p. 19. The portions of Durnford's report describing Fort Mississauga have been quoted in full with Figures 9 through 13.

35 PAC, RG8, II, Vol. 6, p. 46, "The Defence of the British North American Provinces, 1825."

36 Ibid., Annexure 'A,' pp. 14-5.
37 PAC, RG8, II, Vol. 38, p. 17, "Nine Returns" for Fort George, 1830.
38 PAC, MG13, WO44, Vol. 28, p. 86.
39 Thomas Edward Coke, A Subaltern's Furlough: Descriptive of Scenes in Various Parts of the United States, Upper and Lower Canada, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia, during the Summer and Autumn of 1832 (London: Saunders and Otley, 1833), pp. 313-4.
40 Anna Brownell Jameson, Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1965), p. 41.
41 Janet Carnochan, "Reminiscences of Mr. Jas. A. Davidson," NHSR, Vol. 11 (1903), pp. 17-8.
42 PAC, RG5, A1, Upper Canada Sundries, Vol. 54, pp. 26,983-91. Letter and enclosures, 4 October 1821. See also in Janet Carnochan, ed., "Some Original Documents," NHSR, Vol. 30 (1917), pp. 42-5, letters of 1822-23 concerning an exchange of land with James Crooks. Crooks received a large block of property east of King Street in the Fort George military reserve in exchange for his property at Mississauga Point. The final exchange was completed in 1834.

Fort Mississauga Garrison (1814-38)
1 PAC, RG8, I, A1, Vol. 404, pp. 173-5, report of Capt. Henry Vavasour, 24 November 1819.
2 Loc. cit.
3 Loc. cit.
4 PAC, RG8, I, A1, Vol. 391, pp. 133-4, Phillpotts' requisitions, October 1815.
5 This estimate is based on the amount of floor space shown on Durnford's plan of 1823, and on a barracks return for Fort Mississauga of 1852.
6 Ernest A. Cruikshank, ed., A Documentary History of the Campaign on the Niagara Frontier in the Years 1812-1814 (Welland: Lundy's Lane Historical Society, 1908), Vol. 8, p. 51, Riall's "Return of the Right Division," Fort George, 8 July 1814.
7 Included in these totals are officers, NCOs, drummers, rank and file, and the sick and wounded.
8 PAC, RG8, I, D10, Freer Papers, Vol. 1707, p. 89.
9 E.A. Cruikshank, ed., op. cit., p. 259, "Distribution of the Right Division, 8th November 1814."
10 PAC, MG13, WO55, Vol. 1551(7), Smyth Commission, 1825, Annexure 'A,' pp. 14-5.
11 PAC, RG8, I, D8, Militia Records, Vol. 1700, pp. 135, 155 and 298.
12 PAC, MG15, Treasury Office, T1, Bundle 4988, Upper Canada Militia returns, 1839. Although for a few days at the end of November 1839 an attack by rebel supports

in the United States was expected, it failed to materialize. Once again Fort Mississauga was not tested.

"We Stand on Guard" (1839-60)

1 PAC, RG8, I, A1, Vol. 750, pp. 153-4, Col. F. Campbell to Lt.-Col. O'Donnell, Montreal, 9 March 1840. This letter deals with an accident that occured while moving an 18-pound carronade into the fort on 25 February 1840.
2 PAC, RG8, II, Vol. 52, p. 10, "Nine Returns, dated 26 October, 1841, at Barrack Office, Niagara."
3 Major G. Tylden, "The Royal Canadian Rifle Regiment, 1840 to 1870," Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research, Vol. 34 (1956), p. 59.
4 Prescott Telegraph, 17 November 1847.
5 Sir Richard H. Bonnycastle, Canada and the Canadians, in 1846 (London: H. Colburn, 1846), Vol. 1, pp. 198-9. 2 vols.
6 PAC, Canada West Census Returns, 1851, Reel C-996.
7 PAC, RG8, I, A1, Vol. 503, p. 284.
8 Ibid., p. 286.
9 PAC, RG8, II, Vol. 7, pp. 111-2, "Military Memoir of the Province of Canada," Captain W. Hatt Noble, Kingston, 26 July 1856.

The Twilight Years (1861-1921)

1 PAC, RG8, II, Vol. 34, pp. 108-9, Report of Captain R. Harrison, Royal Engineer, to Lt.-Col. Jervois, 8 April 1864. It is unlikely that these 18 inhabitants had any military connections. They were probably civilians who were living in the barracks buildings.
2 Charles Hunter, "Reminiscences of the Fenian Raid, 1866" NHSR, Vol. 20 (1911), pp. 5-6.
3 PAC, RG8, II, Vol. 18, p. 18, "Report of the Commissioners appointed to consider the defences of Canada, 1862."
4 Janet Carnochan, "Niagara, One Hundred Years Ago," NHSR, Vol. 16 (1908), pp. 22-3.
5 "Eleventh Annual Report of the Commissioners for the Queen Victoria Niagara Falls Park, 1896," quoted in Ronald L. Way, Ontario's Niagara Parks: A History (Fort Erie: Niagara Parks Commission, 1960), p. 216.
6 This is treated in National Historic Parks and Sites Branch files relating to Fort Mississauga.
7 Janet Carnochan, History of Niagara (Toronto: William Briggs, 1914), pp. 259-61.
8 See National Historic Parks and Sites Branch files relating to Fort Mississauga.

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5 PAC, Map Division, H4/450 - Niagara - 1814 (Fort Mississauga No. 5), Neg. C-42422.
6 PAC, Map Division, V3/440 - Niagara - 1816, Neg. C-42434.
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24 Metropolitan Toronto Central Library, The J. Ross Robertson Canadian Historical Collection, no. 232.
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26 PAC, Picture Division, Neg. C-10094.
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37 NHPS Picture File, Ontario, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Fort Mississauga, Neg. 1657.
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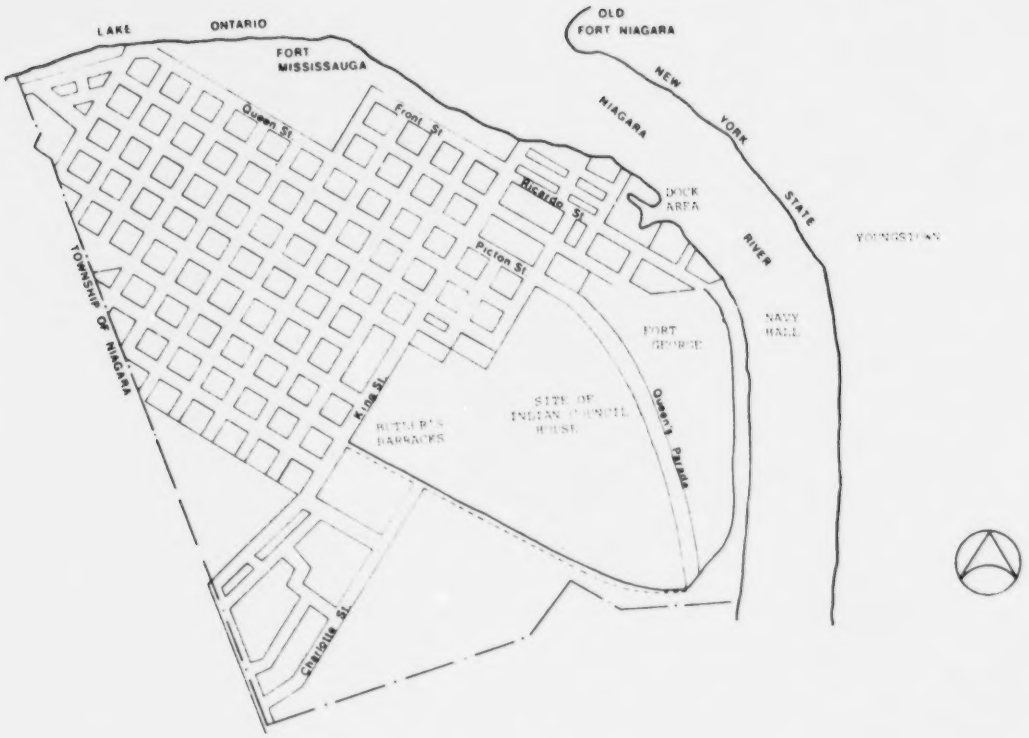
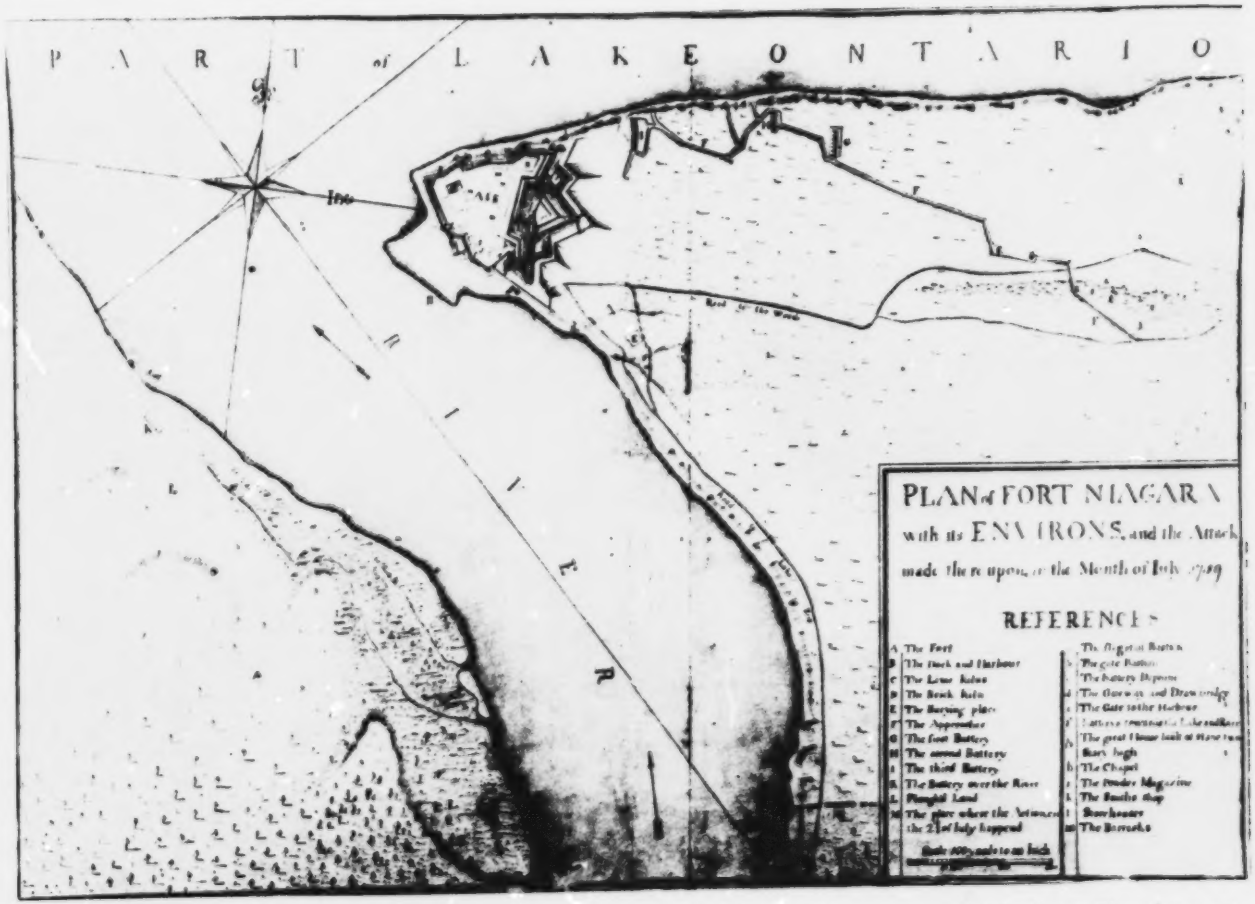
ILLUSTRATIONS



1 Niagara-on-the-Lake (1970). Map of the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake showing the location of Fort Mississauga. (Drawing by K. Gillies.)

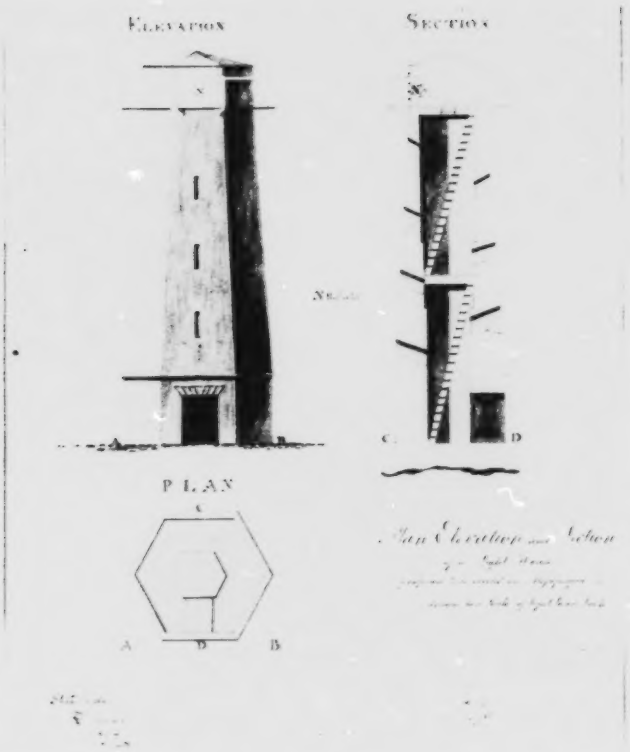


2 Fort Niagara (1759). Anonymous "Plan of Fort Niagara with its Environs, and the Attack made there-upon, in the Month of July 1759." (Public Archives Canada, C-29884.) This map indicates that the French did not have a settlement on the west side of the river and confirms the existence of "ploughed land" and "the battery over the river" on the west bank.

3 Fort George (1799). A portion of a "Plan of Fort George, Upper Canada, Showing the Works of Defence Ordered to be Constructed in 1799." Engineer's Drawing Room, Quebec; Wm. Hall, Lieutenant, Royal Artillery, J.B. Duberger. (Public Archives Canada, C-42426.)

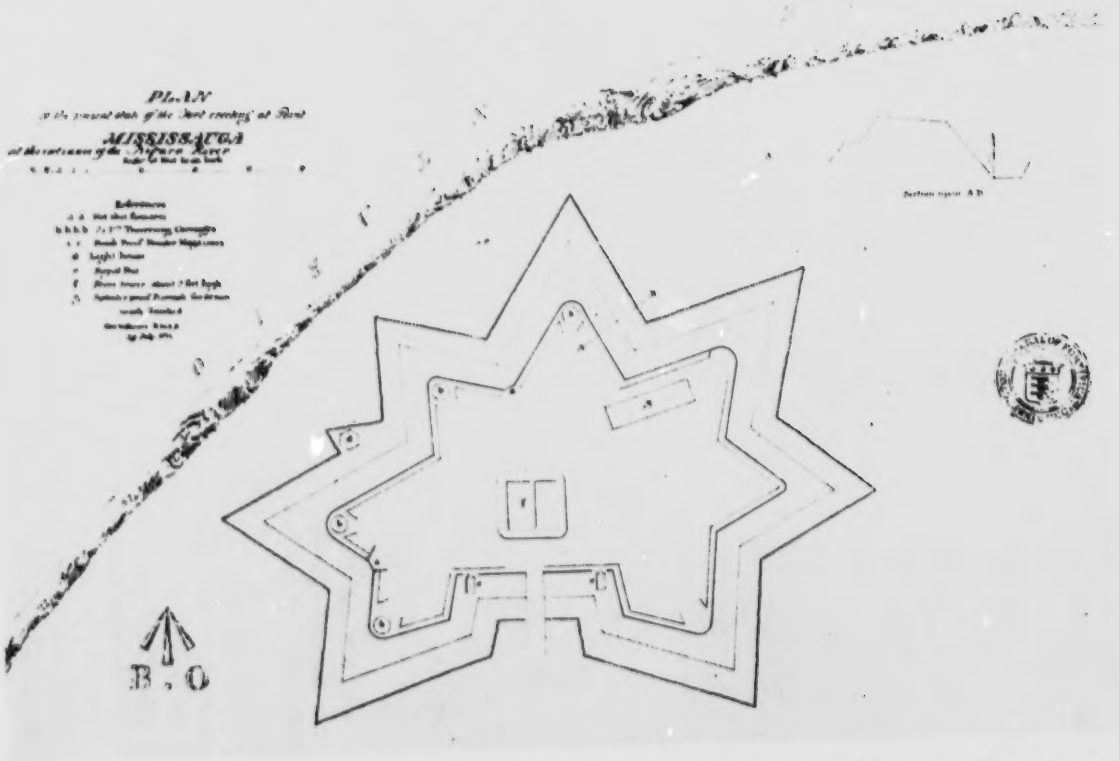
This work was apparently never built. By 1813 only a small battery containing one 24-pounder and one 9-pounder was located on the site. In September 1796, Isaac Weld, a visitor to Newark, observed:

> It is worthy of remark, that as military posts, all those lately established by the British are far superior, in point of situation, to those delivered up. The ground on which the new block house [Fort George] is building, on the British side of Niagara River, is nine feet higher than the top of the stone house in the American fort, and it commands every part of the fort. The chief strength of the old fort is on the land side; towards the water the works are very weak, and the whole might be battered down by a single twelve pounder judiciously planted on the British side of the river. At present it is not proposed to erect any other works on the British side of the river than the block house; but should a fort be constructed hereafter, it will be placed on Mississauga Point, a still more advantageous situation than that on which the block house stands, as it completely commands the entrance into the river. (Isaac Weld, Travels Through the States of North America, and the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, During the Years 1795, 1796, and 1797 [London: John Stockdale, 1799], Vol. 2, pp. 306-7.)

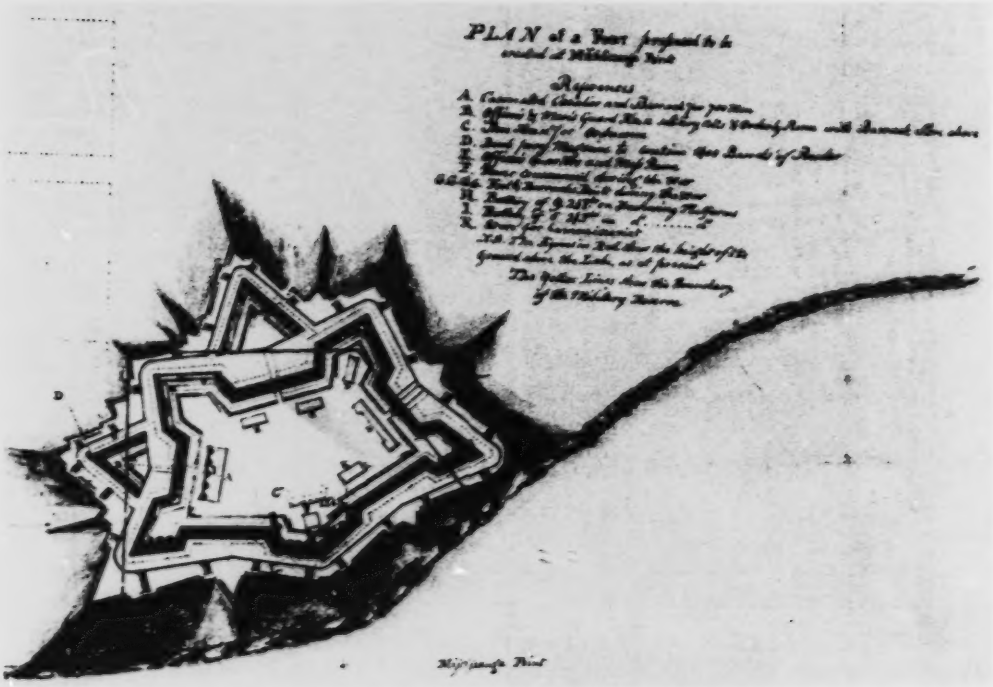


4 Lighthouse at Mississauga Point (1804). "Plan, Elevation and Section of a Light House proposed to be erected on Mississaugua Point...." by Gustavus Nicolls, Capt. Lt. Roy, Eng'r., 1804. (Public Archives Canada, C-33440.)
Built in 1804 by the military masons of the 49th Regiment of Foot on the recommendation of the Board of Lighthouse Commissioners of the Province of Upper Canada, this was the first lighthouse to be erected on the shores of the Great Lakes. It surprisingly survived the American invasion of May 1813 only to be dismantled by the British less than a year later to make way for the construction of Fort Mississauga. When George Heriot visited Niagara in 1805 he commented:

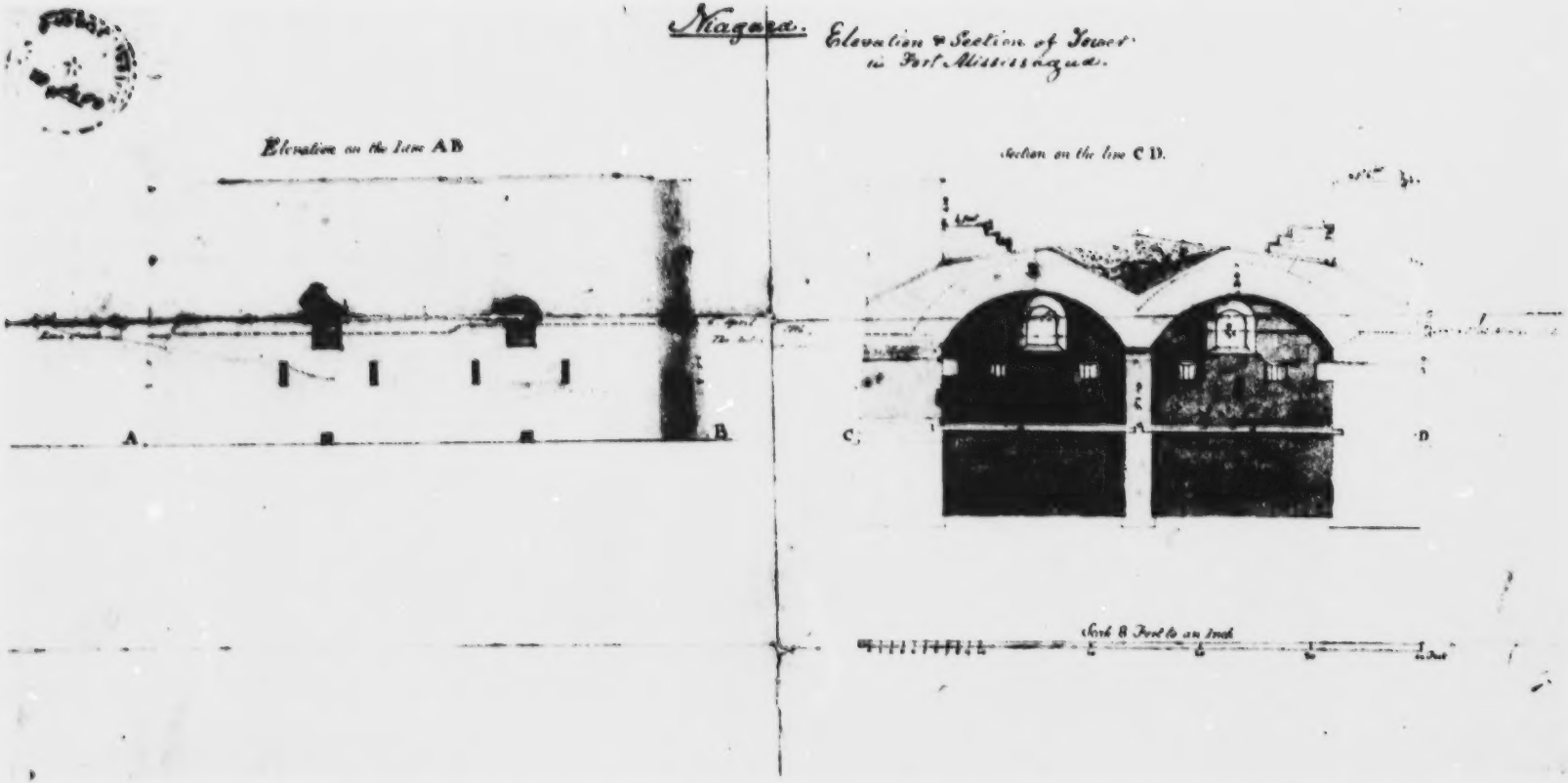
> On Missisague Point, which is on the west side of he [sic] mouth of the river, a light-house, for the guidance of vessels which navigate the lake, has lately been erected. Near this point white fish and black bass are caught in great abundance. (George Heriot, Travels Through the Canadas.... [London: Richard Phillips, 1807], p. 151.)



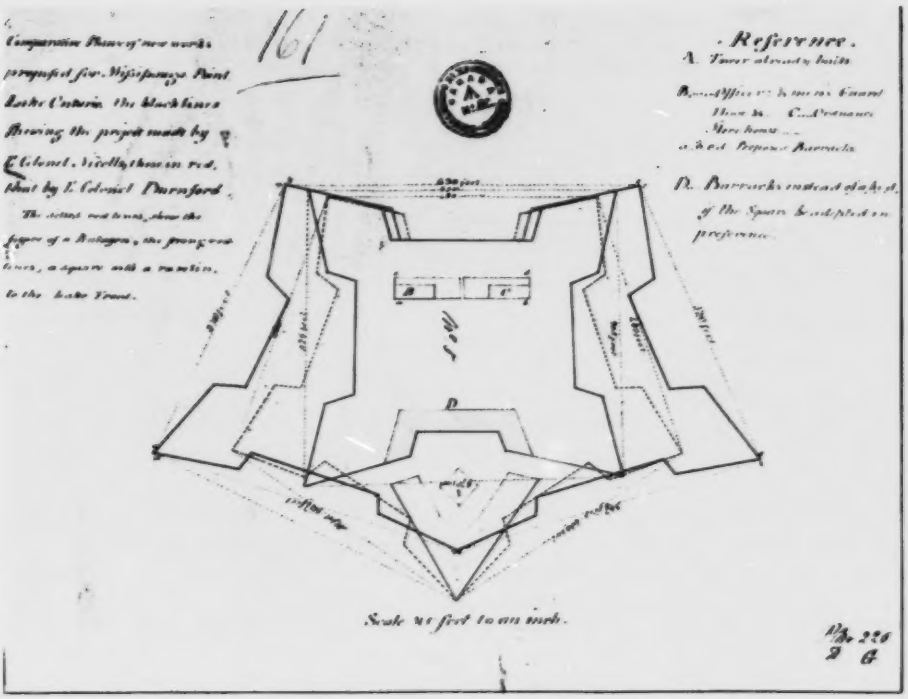
5 Fort Mississauga (1814). "Plan of the Present State of the Fort Erecting at Point Mississauga at the Entrance of the Niagara River." Accompanying a letter by Lt. Col. Hughes to Lt. General Mann, 16 August 1814. (Public Archives Canada, C-42422.) This plan was drawn by George Williams R.M.S.D., on 29 July 1841. Note that the stone tower at this time was only "about 2 feet high" while the barracks building was "nea-ly finished." According to the earthworks, the ramparts wand picketing had by this time reached the state in which Durnford found them in 1823 (see Figs. 9 and 10).

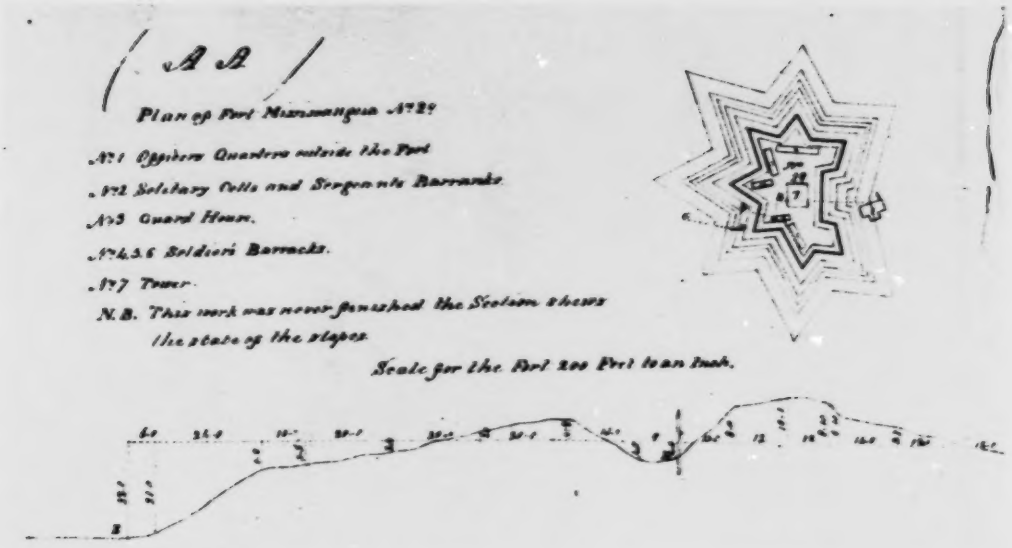


6 Proposed Plan for Fort Mississauga (1816). A portion of a "Plan of a Fort proposed to be erected at Mississauga Point." Lt. Col. Nicolls, Royal Engineers, 1816. (Public Archives Canada, C-42434.)
This plan, dated May 1816, outlines Nicolls' grandiose scheme for fortifying Mississauga Point, no part of which was ever implemented. The outline of the existing work can be seen surrounding the proposed river front bastion in Nicolls' plan. A close look reveals five buildings in addition to the tower within the existing work (F & G). Only one of these barracks buildings is found on Williams' plan of 29 July 1814 (see Fig. 5.) The other four were probably completed in the autumn of 1815 and the spring of 1816.

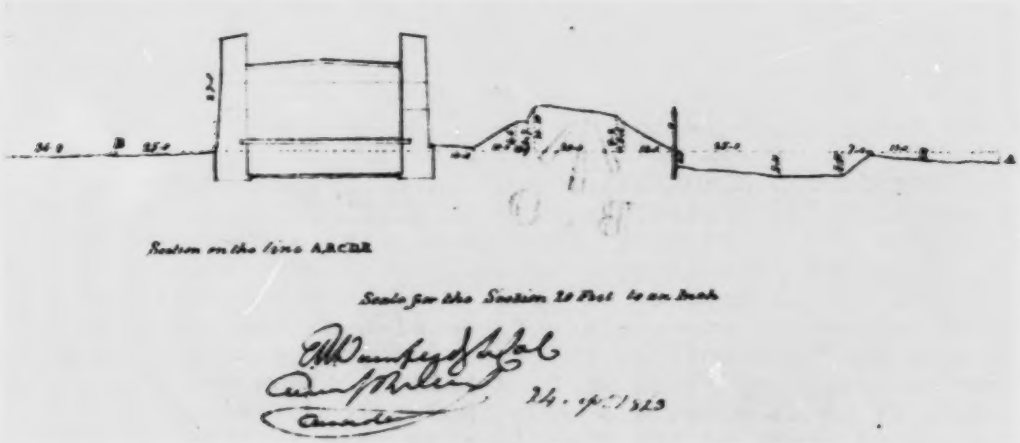


7 Tower at Fort Mississauga (1816). "Niagara: Elevation and Section of Tower in Fort Mississauga," 6 April 1816. (Public Archives Canada, C-42428). While the arches were completed by this date, the outer walls had only risen to about nine feet above ground level. This is the only plan of the tower which shows a firing platform on the roof. There is no evidence that this platform was ever built.

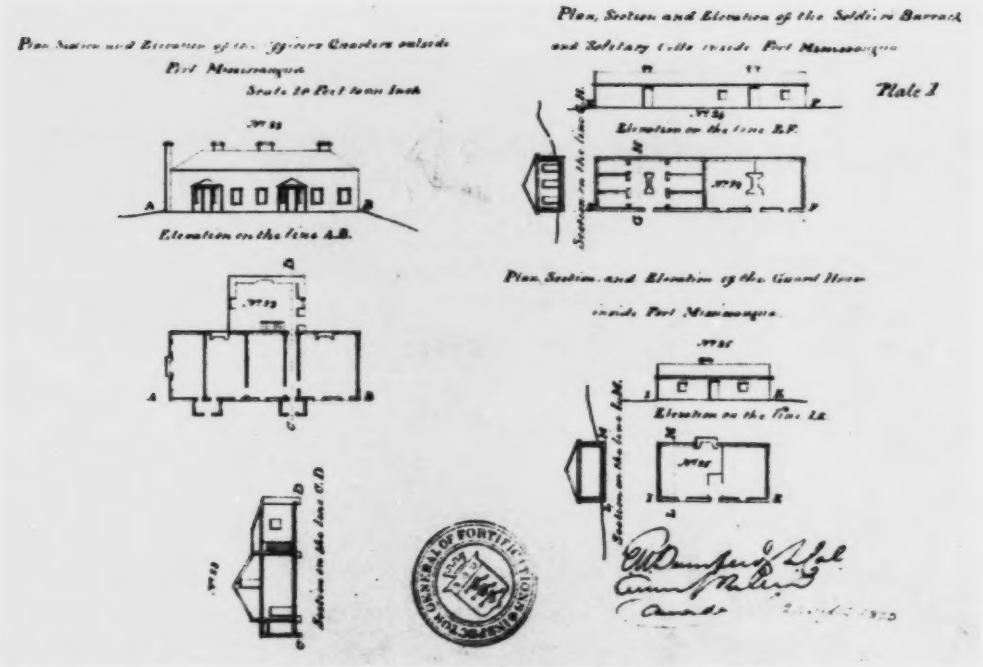


8 Comparative Plans for Fort Mississauga (1821). "Comparative Plans of New Works Proposed For Mississauga Point, Lake Ontario. The Black Lines Showing the Project Made by Lt. Colonel Nicolls, Those in Red, That by Lt. Colonel Durnford." Not dated but probably done around 1821. (Public Archives Canada, C-42427.)
The darker line is the trace of the fortress proposed by Lt. Col. Nicolls (see Fig. 5). The dotted line, one of Durnford's alternative proposals, shows a pentagon containing five bastions, one on each corner and another towards the lakefront. The other plan, also submitted by Durnford (the lighter solid line) consisted of a square with a bastion on each corner and a ravelin on the lakefront. Some idea of the size of the proposed works can be perceived by comparing them with the tower of the existing field work, labelled 'A' on the plan. None of these plans was ever implemented, except for a ploughed trace of the Nicolls plan made in 1815.

A B
Plan of Fort Missisaugua 1823
No 1 Officers Quarters outside the Fort
" 2 Solitary Cells and Sergeants Barracks
No 3 Guard House.
" 4.5.6 Soldiers Barracks.
" 7 Tower
N.B. This work was never finished the Section shews the state of the slopes
Scale for the Fort 200 Feet to an Inch.

9 Fort Mississauga (1823). "Report on the Present State of the New and Old Works of Fortification and Buildings: Fort Mississauga." Lt.-Col. Durnford, Royal Engineers, 23 Sept. 1823. (Public Archives Canada, C-42430.) The building numbers on this plan and their equivalent numbers in other illustrations are listed below:
No. 1 is no. 23, No. 2 is no. 24 and No. 3 is no. 25 in Fig. 11. Nos. 4, 5 and 6 are nos. 26, 27, and 28 respectively in Fig. 12. No. 7 is no. 29 in Fig. 13.



10 Works at Fort Mississauga (1823). From: "Report on the Present State of the New and Old Works of Fortification and Buildings: Fort Mississaugua." Lt.-Col. Durnford, Royal Engineers, 24 Sept. 1823. (Public Archives Canada, C-42423.) The note penned on Section 1 of this plate aptly describe the fate of Fort Mississauga: "This work was never finished ...."


Plan, Section and Elevation of the Soldiers Barrack
and Solitary Cells inside Fort Mississaugua
Plate 2
Elevation on the line E.F.
Section on the line G.H.
Plan, Section and Elevation of the Guard House
inside Fort Mississaugua
Elevation on the line I.K.
Section on the line L.M.
Section on the line C.D.

11 Plans of Buildings at Fort Mississauga (1823). "Report on the Present State of the New and Old Works of Fortification and Buildings: Fort Mississaugua." Lt. Col. Durnford, Royal Engineers, 23 Sept. 1823. (Public Archives Canada, C-42429.)

Structure no. 23

"Plan, Section and Elevation of the Officers' Quarters outside Fort Mississaugua."

Framed building on a Stone foundation with a Stone Kitchen attached, 55 x 20 feet and 12 feet to wall plate, Kitchen 22 x 16 feet. In very bad repair. Not worth more than temporary repairs. (PAC. RG8, II, Vol. 80, Fortifications in Upper and Lower Canada, 1823-24, Lieut. -Col. E. Durnford, p. 19.)

Structure no. 24

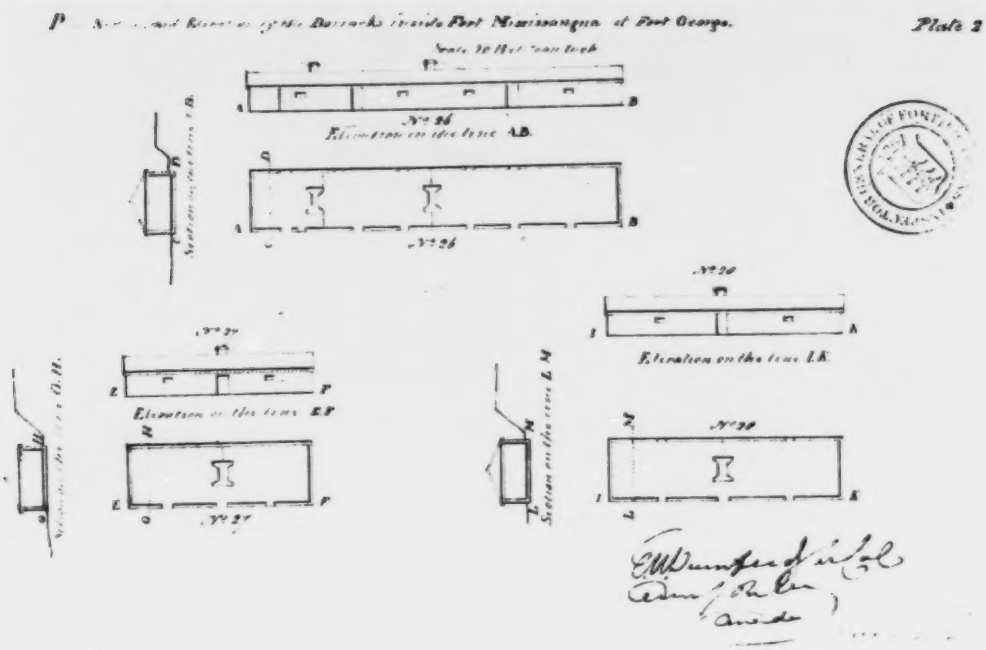
"Plan, Section and Elevation of the Soldiers' Barracks and Solitary Cells Inside Fort Mississaugua."

These buildings are composed of logs without stone foundations. They are filled with all kinds of Vermin and afford very miserable accomodation. Some of them have sunk so low as not to allow the men to stand upright in them. 61 x 16 feet and 7 feet to wall plate. In very bad repair. Not worth repairing. (PAC, RG8, II, Vol. 80, p. 19.)

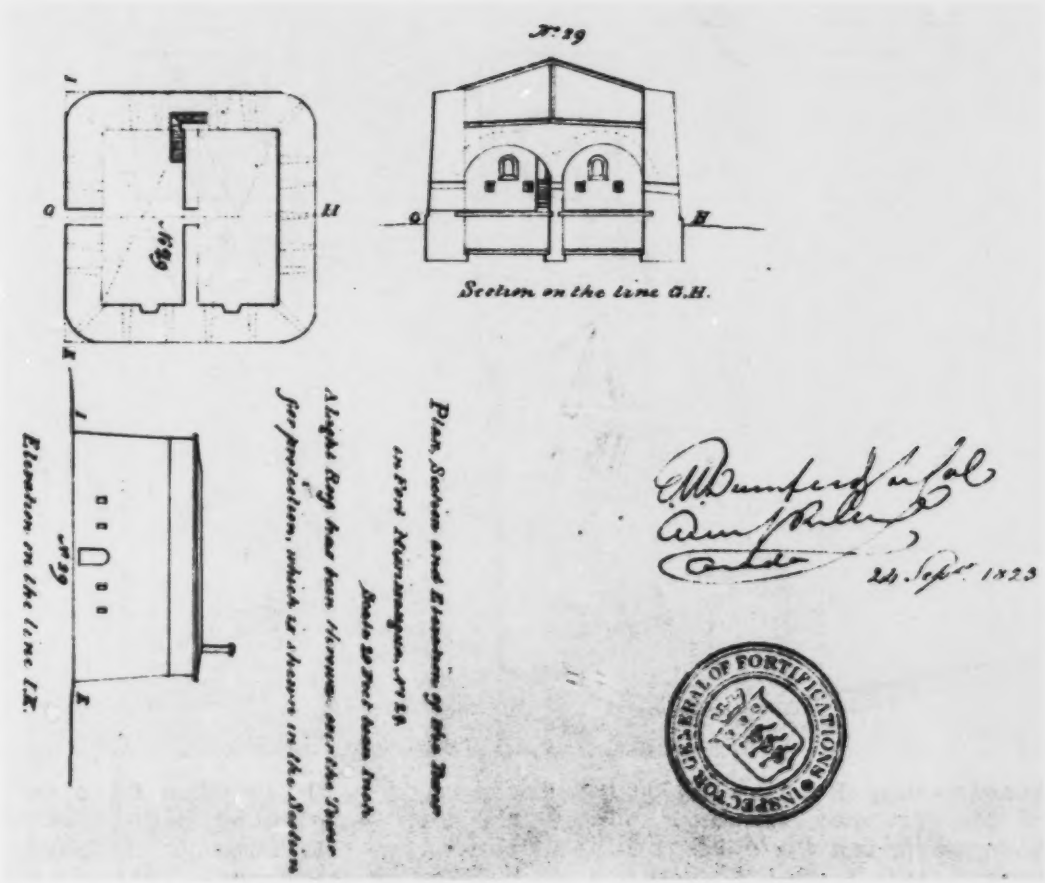
Structure no. 25

"Plan, Section and Elevation of the Guard House Inside Fort Mississaugua."

Log building 32 x 17 feet and 7 feet to wall plate. In very bad repair. Not worth repairing. (PAC, RG8, II, Vol. 80, p. 19.)



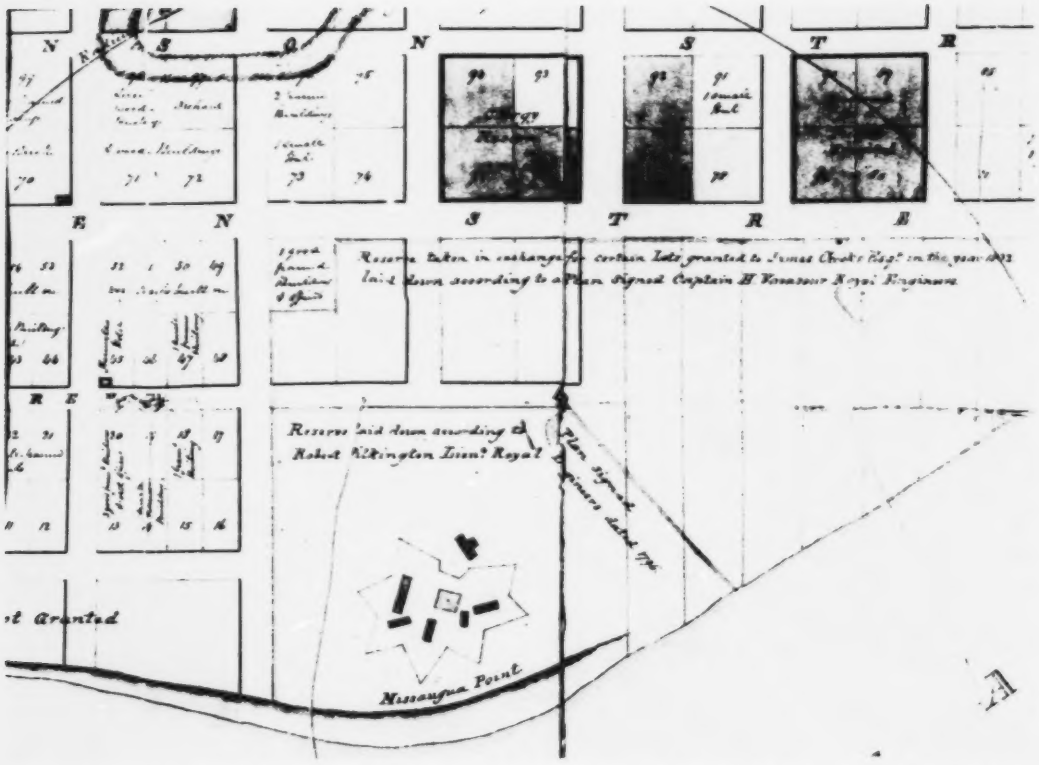
12 Plans of buildings at Fort Mississauga (1823).
"Report on the Present State of the New and Old Works of Fortification and Buildings: Fort Mississauga." Lt. Col. Durnford, Royal Engineers, 23 Sept. 1823. (Public Archives Canada, C-42433.)
Structures 26, 27 and 28
"Plan. Section and Elevation of the Barracks Inside Fort Mississaugua at Fort George."
Composed of logs without stone foundations they are in the same state as No. 24, 100 x 17 feet and 7 feet to the wall plate. No. 27 is 50 x 17 and No. 28 is 63 x 17 feet. Not worth repairing. (PAC, RG8, II, Vol. 80, p. 19.)


Section on the line G.H.
Plan, Section and Elevation of the Tower in Fort Mississaugua
A light Roof has been thrown over the Tower for protection, which is shewn in the Section
Elevation on the line I.K.
26. Sept. 1823
GENERAL OF FORTIFICATIONS INSPECTOR

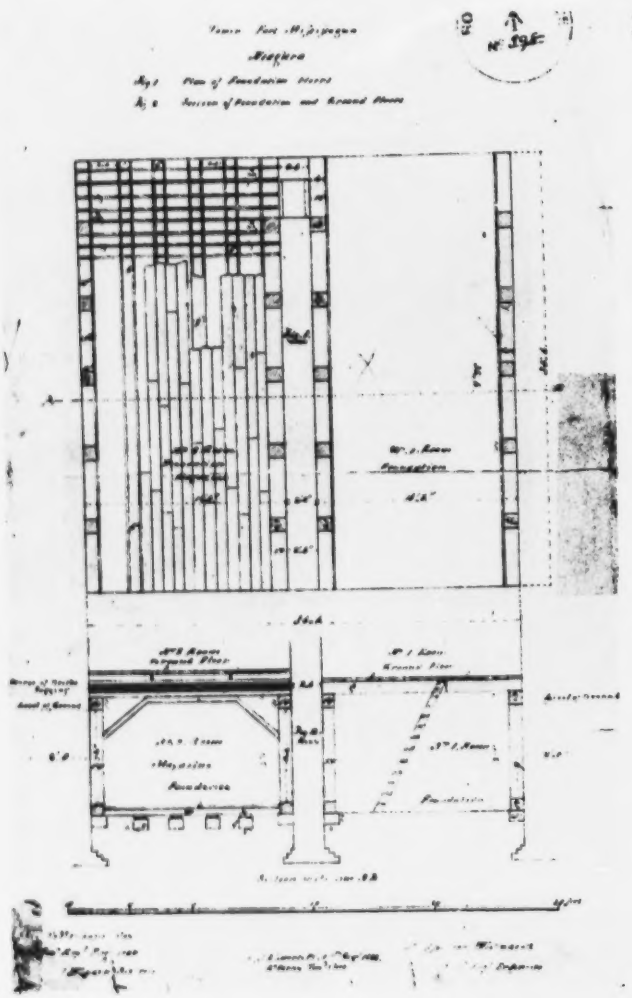
13 Tower at Fort Mississauga (1823). "Report on the Present State of the New and Old Works of Fortification and Buildings: Fort Mississaugua." Lt. Col. Durnford, Royal Engineers, 23 Sept. 1823. (Public Archives Canada, C-42421.)
Structure 29
"Plan, Section and Elevation of the Tower in Fort Mississaugua."

> A square stone Building with the corners rounded. 50 x 50 feet and 25 feet high. In excellent repair. (PAC, RG8, II, Vol. 80, p. 19.)

Compare this with an 1816 plan of the tower (see Fig. 7). The firing platform shown in the latter does not seem to have been built, instead "a light roof" has been constructed "for protection."

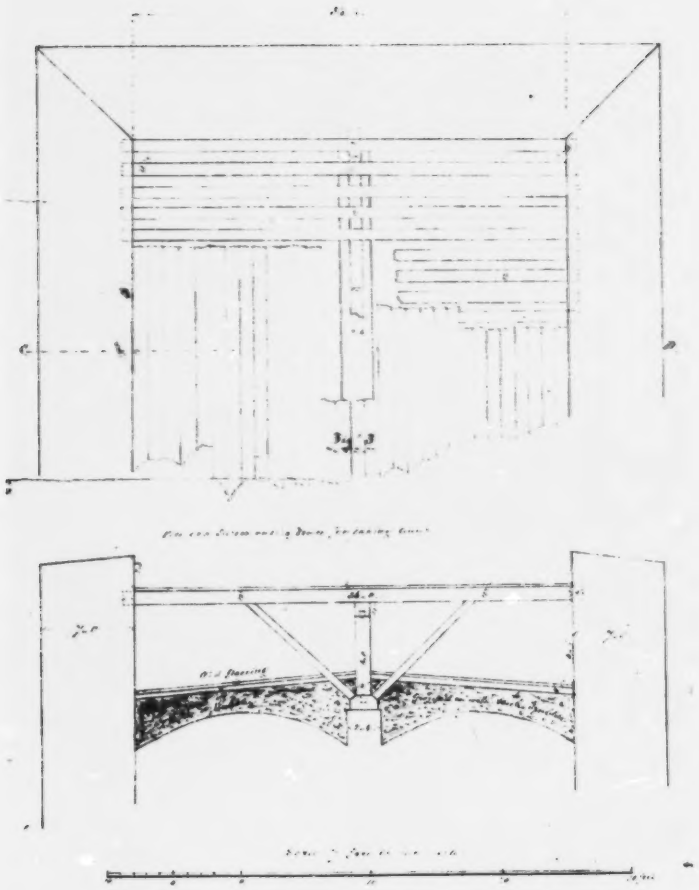

Reserve taken in exchange for certain Lots granted to James Crooks Esqr. in the year 1832
laid down according to a Plan Signed Captain H Vavasour Royal Regiment
Reserve laid down according to
Robert Pilkington Lieut. Royal
Plan Signed January dated 1796
Granted
Missaugua Point
A

14 Mississauga Point (1837). A section of a "Plan of a Portion of the Town of Niagara Showing the Lots Adjoining Mississaugua Reserve Which Have Been Built Upon, Also the Lots Which Have Been Granted, But Not Built Upon," Royal Engineers Office, Toronto, 11th Nov. 1837. George Boughton, Clerk of Works. (Public Archives Canada, C-42432.)
The arrangement of buildings on this plan is the same as found in Durnford's plan of 1823 (see Fig. 9). It is also similar to those found on the Nicolls plan of 1816 (see Fig. 6) except for the absence of the officers' quarters outside the fort, which is not on the 1816 plan. This plan also shows the extent of land obtained from James Crooks in 1832 to increase the size of the military reserve.

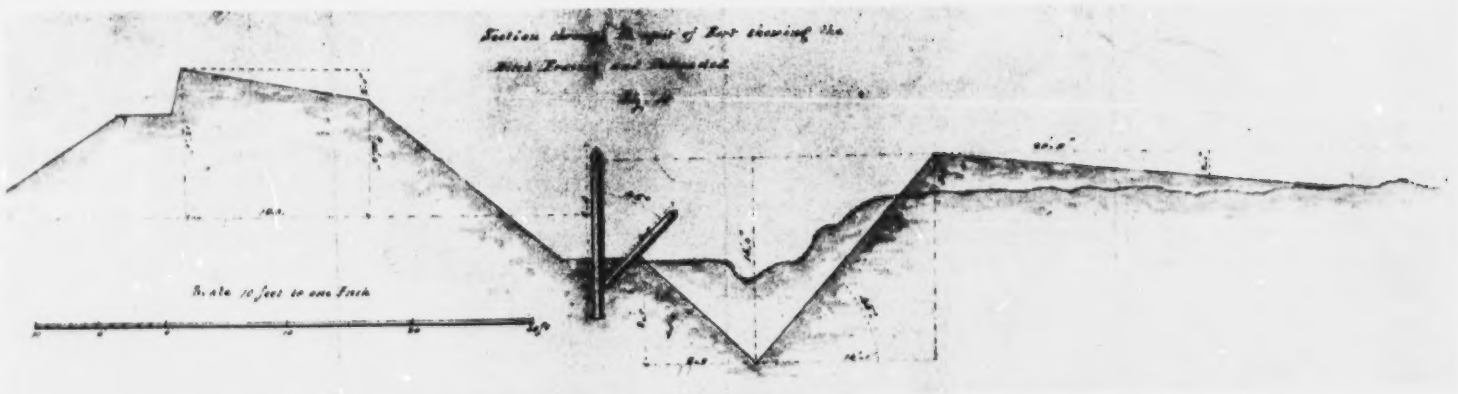


15 Fort Mississauga (1838). A plan of the foundation floors and a section of the foundation and ground floors from "Diagrams of Tower, Parapet, Drawbridge at Fort Mississauga. 17 August 1838." Drawn by C. MacKenzie, Capt. Roy'l Engineer, Western District. (Public Archives Canada, C-42424.)
In 1831 the tower was described by Captain Phillpotts:

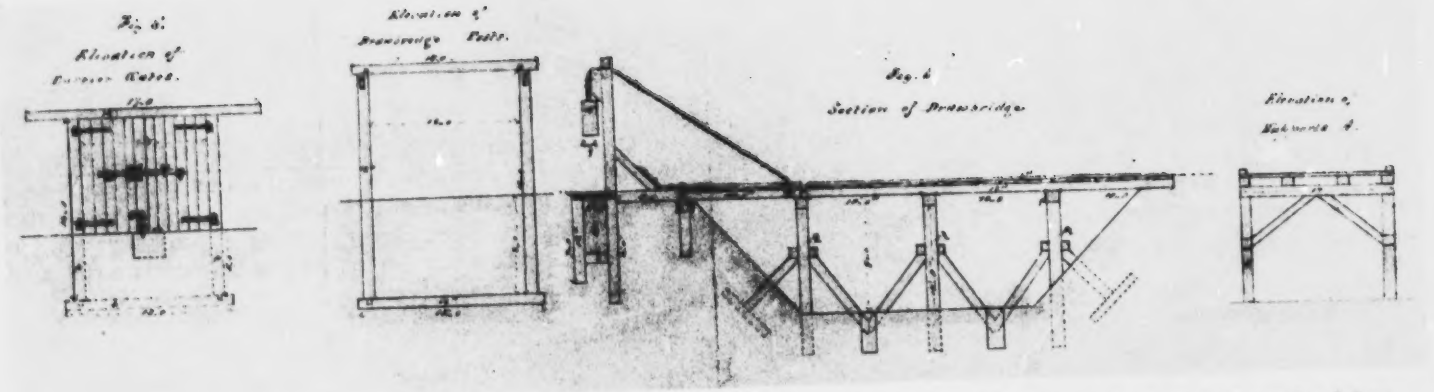
> 47 feet long by 47 feet wide and 28 feet high with a cellar under divided into 2 apartments, this Building is lined inside and outside with Bricks, and the interior of the walls hearted with Stone and has Bomb Proof arches with a Platform for guns over, the part of the Roof over the Walls is covered with Tin, the remainder with Shingles one of the rooms is used for an ordnance Store and at present contains a quantity of live carcasses. (PAC, RG8, II, Vol. 28, p. 17.)



Fort Mississauga (1838). "Plan and section of Top of Tower for Taking Guns" from "Diagrams of Tower, Parapet, Drawbridge at Fort Mississauga. 17 August 1838." Drawn by C. MacKenzie, Capt., Roy'l Engineer, Western District. (Public Archives Canada, C-42431.)
This plan is interesting as it is the only evidence of a gun platform having been built on the tower. An 1816 plan (see Fig. 7) shows a four-foot platform proposed for the top of the tower; however, this was never constructed. Durnford's 1823 plan (see Fig. 13) shows that no gun platform had been built and that only "A Light Roof has been thrown over the Tower for protection." The 1838 plan shows a gun platform which would also serve as a roof. This platform does not exist today and it would require an on-site inspection to determine whether it were ever built.



17 Fort Mississauga (1838). "Section Through Parapet of Fort Showing the Ditch Fraised and Palisaded" from "Diagrams of Tower, Parapet, Drawbridge at Fort Mississauga, 17 August 1838." Drawn by C. MacKenzie, Capt., Roy'l Engineer, Western District. (Public Archives Canada, C-5334.) Although the plans shown here and in Figures 14 to 16 are only proposals, there is evidence that these repairs were carried out.



18 Fort Mississauga (1838). "Elevation of Barrier Gates and Elevation of Drawbridge Posts" and "Section of Drawbridge" from "Diagrams of Tower, Parapet, Drawbridge at Fort Mississauga, 17 August 1838." Drawn by C. MacKenzie, Capt., Royal Engineer, Western District. (Public Archives Canada, C-5333.) The only mention of the existence of a drawbridge found in military despatches refers to an accident which happened over the bridge when horses and team fell into the ditch. One horse was killed and two men were injured. (PAC, RG8, I, Vol. 750, pp. 153-9.)

19 Fort Mississauga (1852). Enlargement of insert from "Canada Niagara Verification Plan." Surveyed by Mr. F.F. Passmore, Prov'l Land Surveyor; Verified by Lieut. Berdoe A. Wilkinson, Rl. Eng'rs. and Mr. Nelson Walker, Surv'r and Draftsm'n, Rl. Engin'r Dept.; February and June, 1852. (Public Archives Canada, C-42425.) Except for those buildings labelled "artillery store," "engineers store" and "canteen and barracks," the size and arrangement of the other structures within the work are similar to those noted in 1816 (see Fig. 6.) By 1823 (see Fig. 9) the building labelled "canteen and barracks" appeared on the plans. The artillery store and engineers store were probably added during the late 1830s, although it is possible they were built beforehand but not on earlier plans because of their small size. A ravelin was constructed outside the main entrance in 1838, thus bringing the "canteen and barracks" within the works.

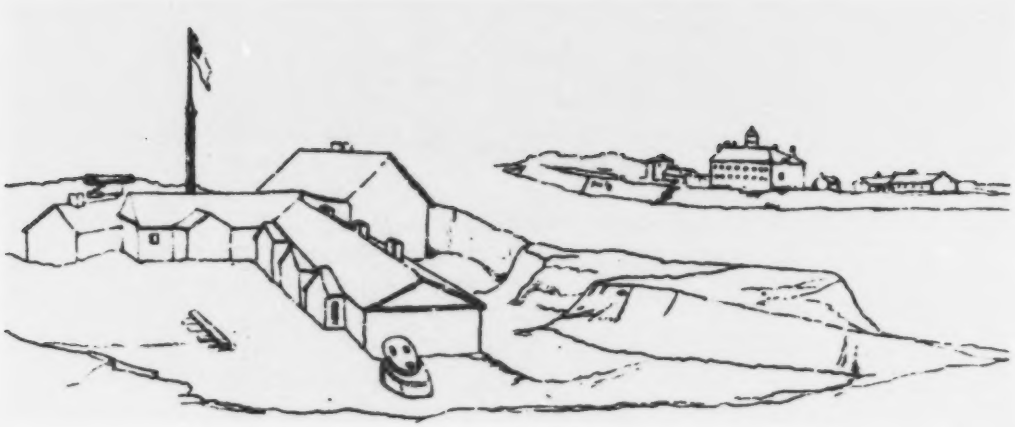
20 Lighthouse (ca. 1810). "The Lighthouse at Niagara, U.C., 1805-14." From an anonymous sketch. J. Ross Robertson, The History of Freemasonry in Canada (Toronto: Hunter Rose, 1899), Vol. 1, p. 495. (Public Archives Canada, C-23676.) On 4 October 1939 the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada erected a plaque on outer wall of Fort Mississauga, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, commemorating the Point Mississauga lighthouse. The inscription reads:

POINT MISSISSAUGA LIGHTHOUSE

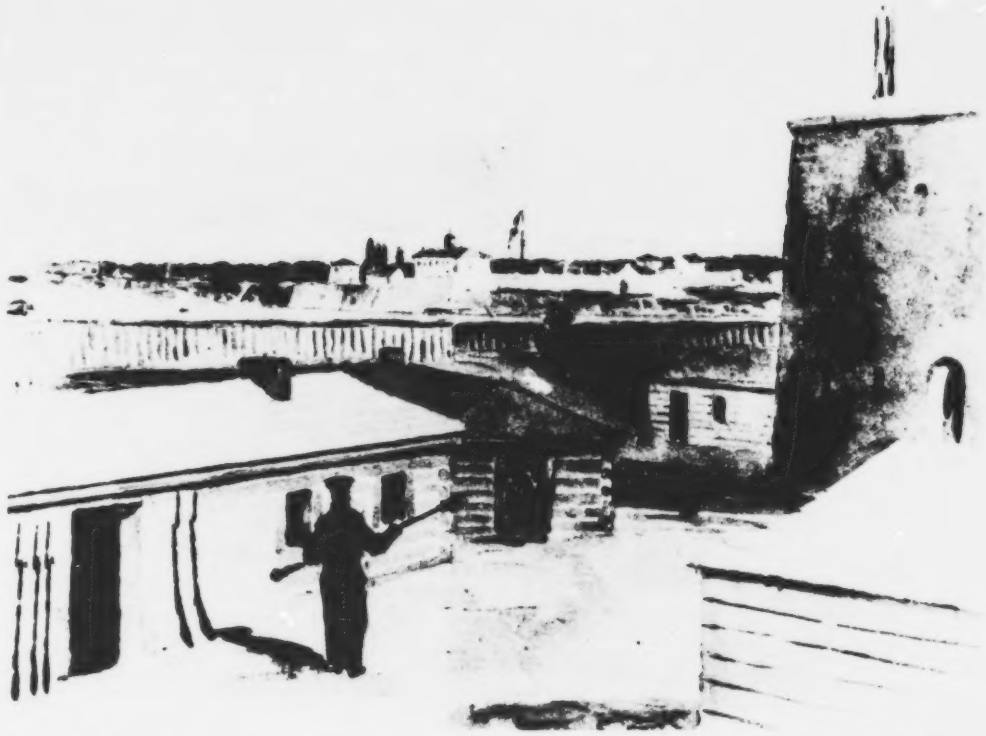
The first on the Great Lakes, built of stone in 1804 by John Symington, under orders from Lieutenant-Governor Peter Hunter; demolished in 1814 to make room for this fort, its materials with debris from the ruined town of Niagara were incorporated into this tower.

For a plan of the lighthouse and farther information see Figure 4.

21 Niagara (1813). "Fort Niagara, Fort George, Niagara Town, 1813. From an Old Print." J. Ross Robertson, The History of Freemasonry in Canada (Toronto: Hunter Rose, 1899), Vol. 1, p. 531. (Public Archives Canada, C-23675.) This illustration shows a battery located on Mississauga Point (near the lighthouse) as well as what appears to be another battery located further along the shore (right side of the illustration).



22 Fort Mississauga (1824). "Fort Mississaugua, From Sketch by Gen. Seaton Gordon, 1824." (Public Archives Canada, C-4648.) This is probably the oldest existing drawing of Fort Mississauga. The three low buildings are noted on Durnford's plan of 1823 and were known as "Soldiers' Barracks." Except for the obvious addition of storm porches these three buildings seem to conform to Durnford's plans (see Figs. 8, 9, 11). The taller structure to the right of the flag pole remains a mystery. It is not found on any of the plans and there is no record of the date of its construction or its use.



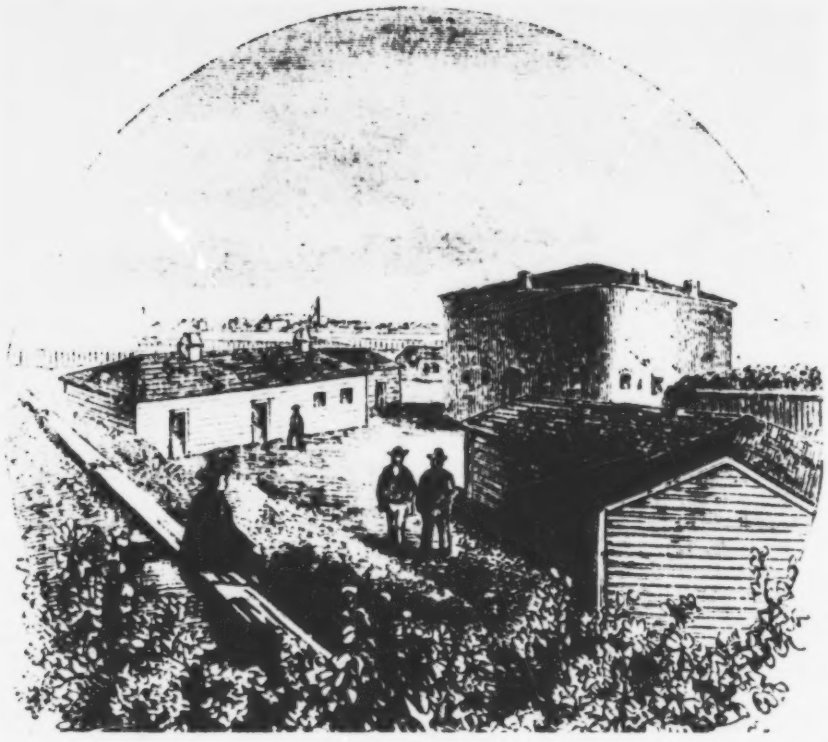
23 Fort Mississauga (1840). "Fort Niagara from Fort Mississauga, 1840." From a sketch by P.J. Bainbrigg. (Public Archives Canada, C-1189.) According to an 1854 plan (see Fig. 19) the buildings pictured here are from left to right: barracks, cook house, officers' quarters (behind the tower), tower, and engineers' store (bottom right corner). The guns on the rampart are mounted en barbette. Fort Niagara can be seen in the distance. For similar views in 1860 and 1969 see Figures 25 and 44. In 1837 Anna Brownell Jameson wrote of forts Niagara and Mississauga:

> The opposite shore, about a quarter of a mile off, is the state of New York. The Americans have a fort on ours. What the amount of their garrison may be I know not, but our force consists of three privates and a corporal with adequate arms and ammunition, i.e. rusty firelocks and damaged guns. The fortress itself I mistook for a dilapidated brewery. This is charming - it looks like peace and security at all events.

Anna Brownell Jameson, Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1965), p. 41.

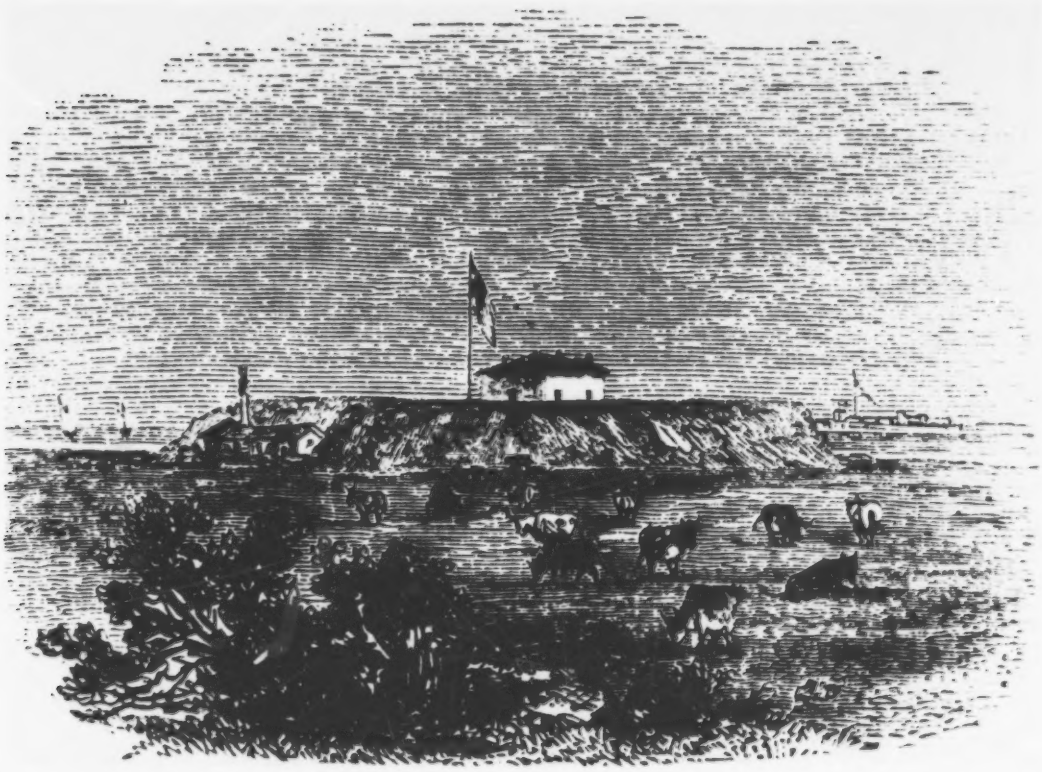
24 Fort Mississauga (ca. 1850-52). "Fort Mississauga, Niagara." From a watercolour by General A.R.V. Crease. (Metropolitan Toronto Central Library, No. 232.) This painting made during the early 1850s shows Fort Mississauga as viewed from the lakefront near the corner of Simcoe and Front streets. In 1856 Captain W.H. Noble, Royal Engineers, in a report on Canadian defenses wrote of Fort Mississauga:

> Fort Mississagua consists of an irregular four sided bastioned redoubt, one front of which, with its lower battery, faces the Lake; the other the land. In the centre of this work is a square bombproof masonry tower, mounting one gun, and having a furnace for red hot shot at the top. It accommodates 36 men and has a magazine for 280 barrels of gunpowder, in the basement. The redoubt is not reveted, and its fraises and palisades have rotted. It mounts 6 - 24 prs, 1 - 18 pr, 1 - 8" Howitzer, 2 - 8", 2 - 10" Mortars and two 18 pr. cannonades in the lower battery - the carriages and platforms of the guns are in an unserviceable state; and the waves of the Lake are rapidly making a breach in the lower Battery; while the whole of the palisades so requires renewal and the slopes to be restored to their proper size and shape. There are two small expence magazines holding 150 barrels of powder, sufficient for the defence of the fort. - Some houses in the fort accommodate 2 officers and 111 men. (PAC, RG8, II, Vol. 7, p. 111.)



25 Fort Mississauga (1860). "Interior View - Fort Mississaga in 1860." From a woodcut by Benson J. Lossing in The Pictorial Field-Book of the War of 1812 (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1869), p. 419. (Public Archives Canada, C-10095.) This view is quite similar to Bainbrigge's made twenty years earlier (see Fig. 23 for the names of the buildings shown, based on plan in Fig. 19). Lossing wrote of his visit to Fort Mississauga on 1860:

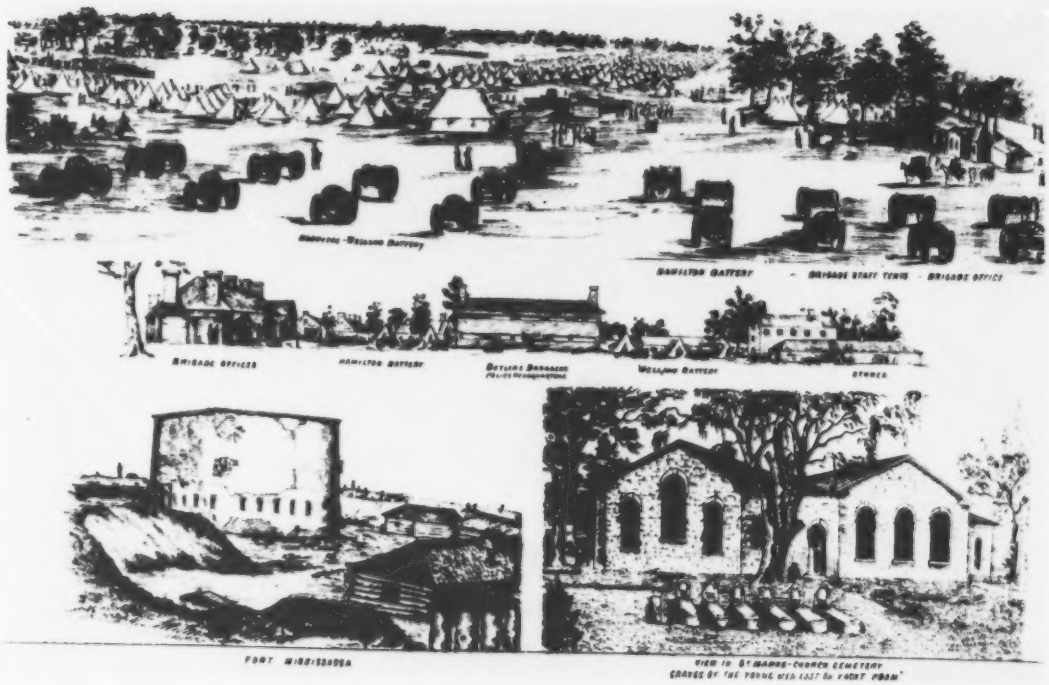
> We found the gate of Fort Mississauga wide open, and walked in without leave. Not a human face was visible. I went up to and around the ramparts, and, taking a position over the entrance gate, from which I could see most of the interior and Fort Niagara beyond, I sketched the scene. In this view are seen the barracks and the castle, with Fort Niagara across the river in the extreme distance. The castle is built of brick. The walls are eight feet in thickness, and covered with stucco. While engaged with the sketch I was startled by a voice near me. It was that of the whole garrison, comprised in the person of Patrick Burns, who told me to make as many sketches as I pleased, for the fort was uninhabited except by his own family. (Benson J. Lossing, The Pictorial Field-Book of the War of 1812 New York: Harper and Brothers, 1869 , p. 419.)



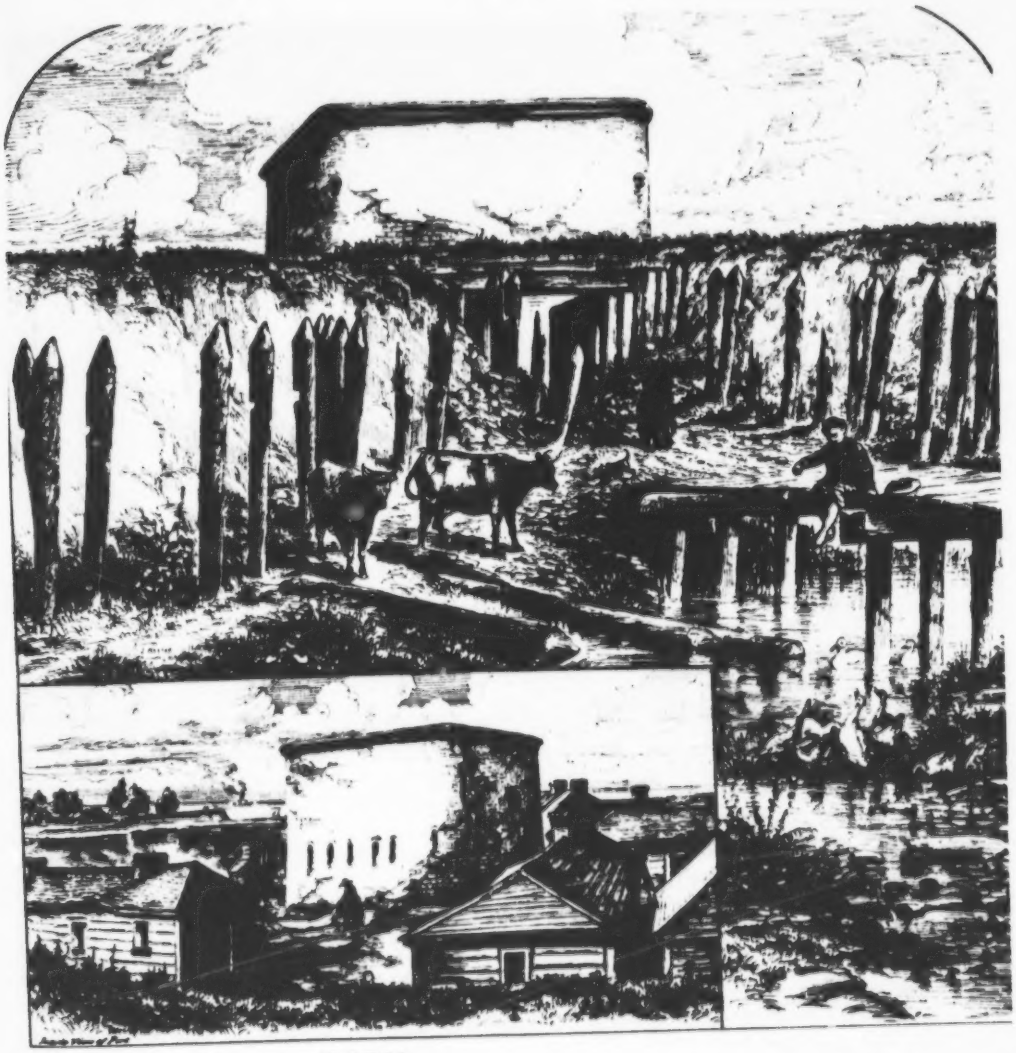
26 Fort Mississauga (1860). "Distant View of Fort Mississaga." From a woodcut by Benson J. Lossing, 17 August 1860, in The Pictorial Field-Book of the War of 1812 (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1869), p. 419. (Public Archives Canada, C-10094.) The building located below the ramparts was used in 1853 as a canteen and barracks (see Fig. 19). The illustration does not show the ravelin which was built around the barracks in 1838 and which is shown quite clearly on the 1853 plan (see Fig. 19).

Lossing wrote:

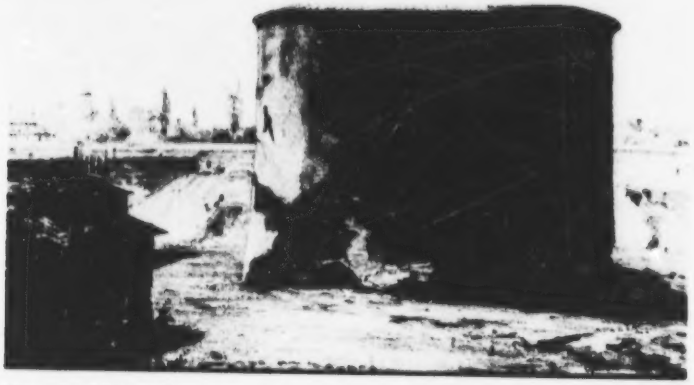
> From Fort George we rode to Niagara, half a mile below, halted long enough to obtain refreshments for ourselves and the horse, and then rode out over the garrison reservation, north-eastward of the town, to Fort Mississaga, a strong earthwork with a castle, which was constructed by the British during the war of 1812. Cattle were grazing on the plain; the waters of Lake Ontario, ruffled by a breeze, were sparkling in the distance, and indeed the whole scene was one of quiet and repose. (Benson J. Lossing, The Pictorial Field-Book of the War of 1812 [New York: Harper and Brothers, 1869], p. 418.)



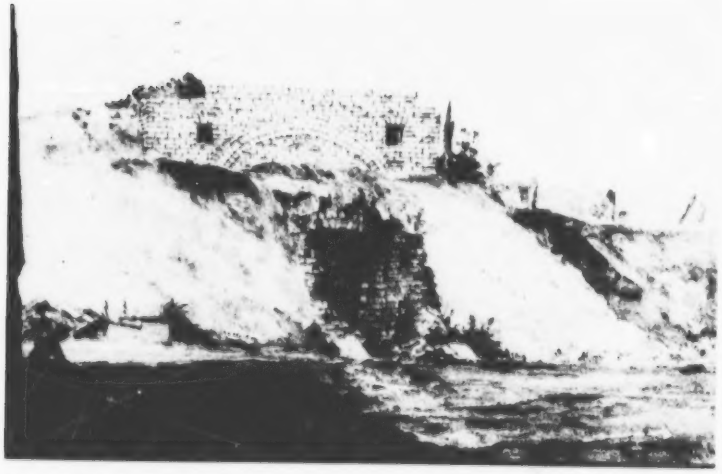
27 Niagara Sketches (1875).
"Sketches Near Niagara by Jas. G. MacKay." From a woodcut in the Canadian Illustrated News, 10 July 1875, p. 25. (National Historic Parks and Sites Branch.)
This view, looking from the south corner of the work, shows the tower, officers' quarters (background), barracks (middle) and soldiers' barracks (foreground). The deterioration of the pickets between 1860 and 1874 can be seen by comparing this view with Lossing's interior view of the fort (see Fig. 25.) after 1870. In earlier pictures (see Figs. 25 and 26) the tower appears with a roof. This was also destroyed by the fire.



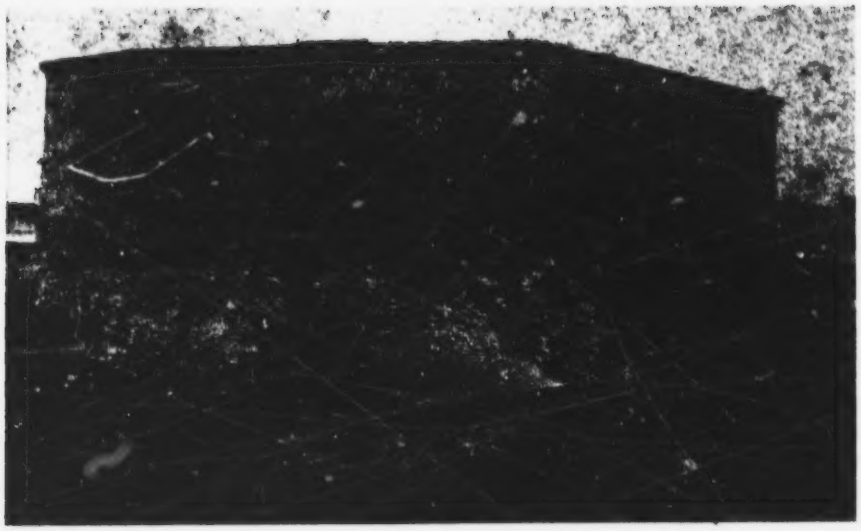
28 Fort Mississauga (1879).
"Niagara-Old Fort Missisauga." From a woodcut by J. Weston in the Canadian Illustrated News, 23 August 1879, p. 113. (Public Archives Canada, C-4647.)
The larger picture shows the main gate of the fort with the tower in the background. The small picture is a view of the interior showing portions of six of the eight buildings. Beginning with the wooden building on the left and proceeding clockwise, the structures shown are soldiers' barracks, the main gate, the tower, barracks, cook house, officers' quarters, and another barracks. Compared with pictures of the fort in 1840 and 1860 (see Figs. 23 and 25) the deterioration of the wooden buildings, the tower, the pickets and the ramparts is very evident.



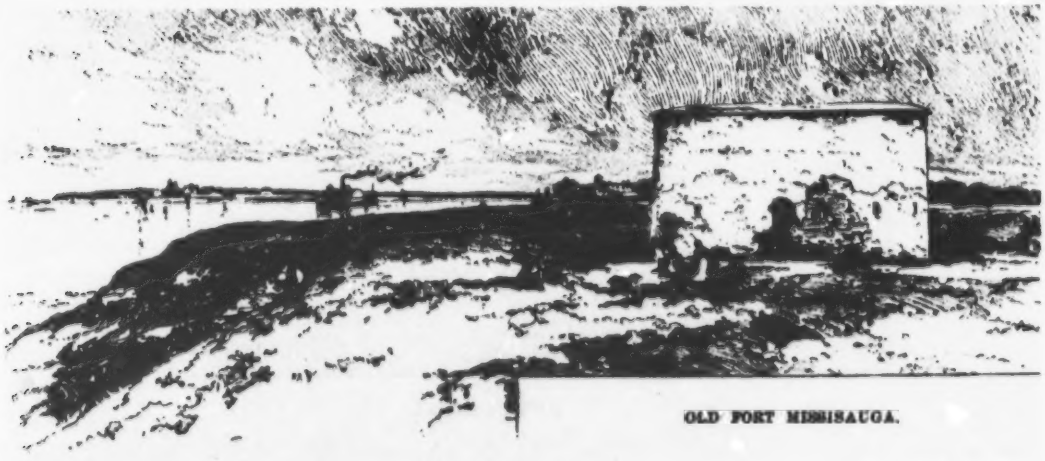
29 Fort Mississauga (ca. 1880). "Fort Mississauga." From a watercolour by William Armstrong probably done during the early 1880s. (Public Archives Canada, C-10509.) From left to right are the soldiers' barracks, officers' quarters, a magazine (built into the ramparts), the northeast wall of the tower, and the other magazine.



30 Magazine at Fort Mississauga (ca. 1880). "Fort Mississauga Magazine." From an early 1880s watercolour by William Armstrong. (Public Archives Canada, C-10510.) A portion of the northwest wall can be seen behind the man seated on the far left. The pickets and the brickwork on the tower and the magazine seem to be in a state of disrepair.



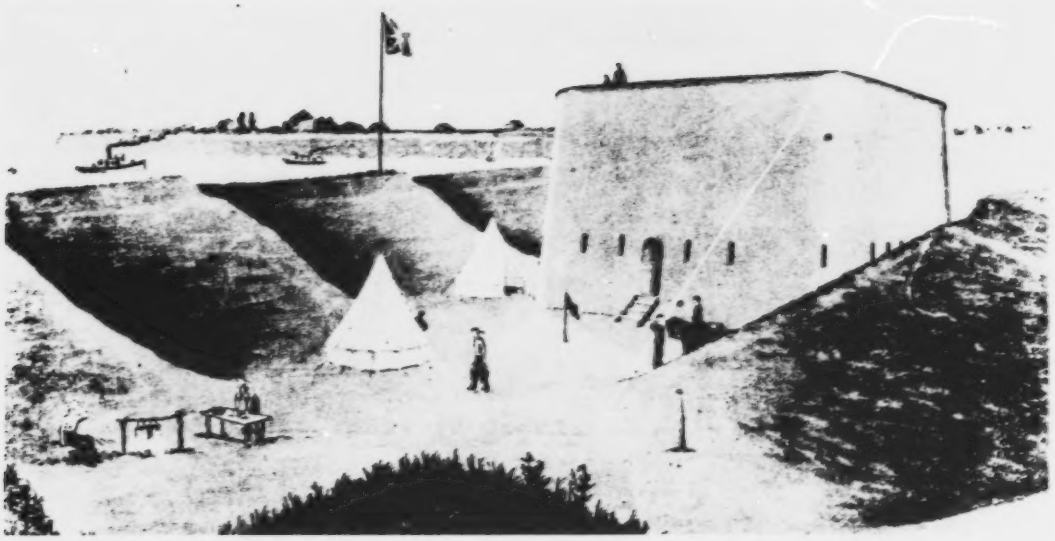
31 Tower at Fort Mississauga (ca. 1880). From a stereograph. (Photo by C.J. Swenson, Kirby Collection, 127, Ontario Archives.)
To the left of the tower a portion of the officers' quarters can be seen, while to the right is a man peering through binoculars. A portion of the Queen's Royal Hotel is in the distance.



32 Fort Mississauga (ca. 1888). "Old Fort Missisauga." From a line engraving. (Public Archives Canada, C-10092.)
This view, probably from the late 1880s, shows the absence of the wood barracks buildings (dismantled around 1883-88). The earthworks were probably not as much reduced as the engraver has indicated.

33 The tower at Fort Mississauga (1888). From a photograph. (Ontario Archives.)
Compare this photo with one taken 81 years later (see Fig. 44).

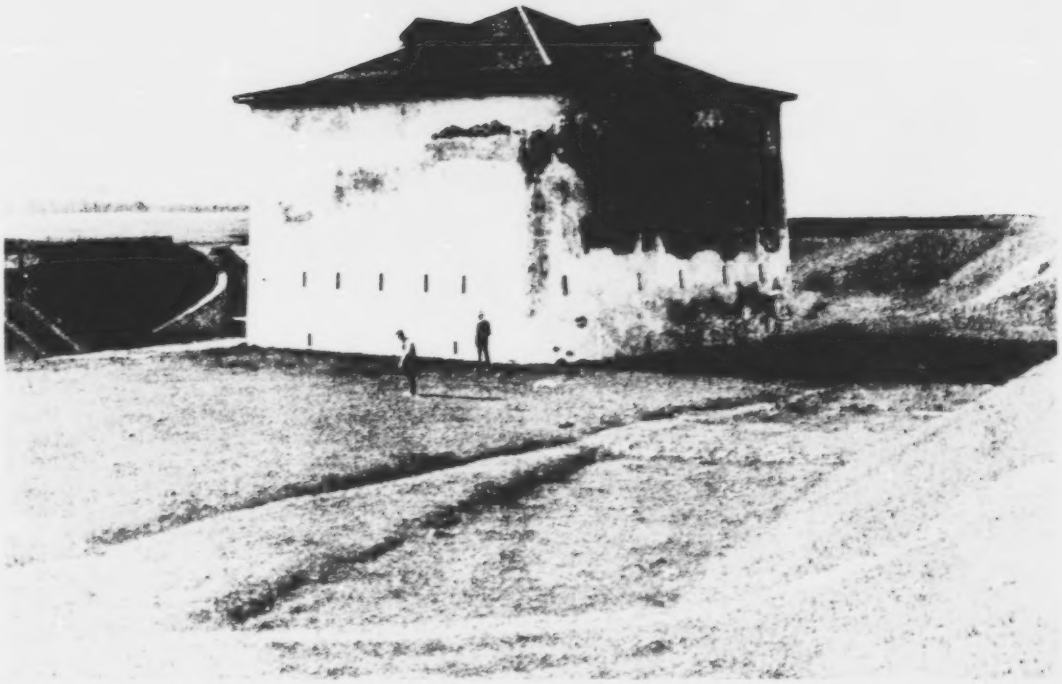
34 Fort Mississauga (1890).
"Fort Mississauga 1890, Niagara-on-the-Lake." From a watercolour by Robert Holmes. (Public Archives Canada, C-3827.)
The picket work surrounding the entrance in 1879 (see Fig. 28) is not in evidence in this picture.



35 Fort Mississauga (1890).
"Fort Mississauga." From a half-tone print in the Dominion Illustrated News, Vol. 5, 1 November 1890, p. 302. (Public Archives Canada, C-10091.)
The editor of the News described Fort Mississauga:

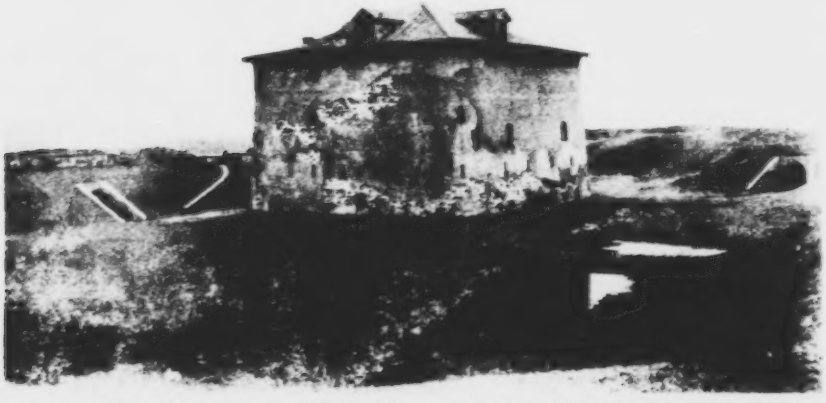
> the projecting and re-entrant angles, the covered way and underground passages, the principal entrance with its massive double-plank gate thickly studded with iron bolts, the magazine and store-rooms, and all the other salient features of the stronghold may still be readily identified.

The slope of the earthworks is somewhat exaggerated. The men shown here are likely members of one of many Ontario militia regiments which trained at the Niagara camp during the summer months.



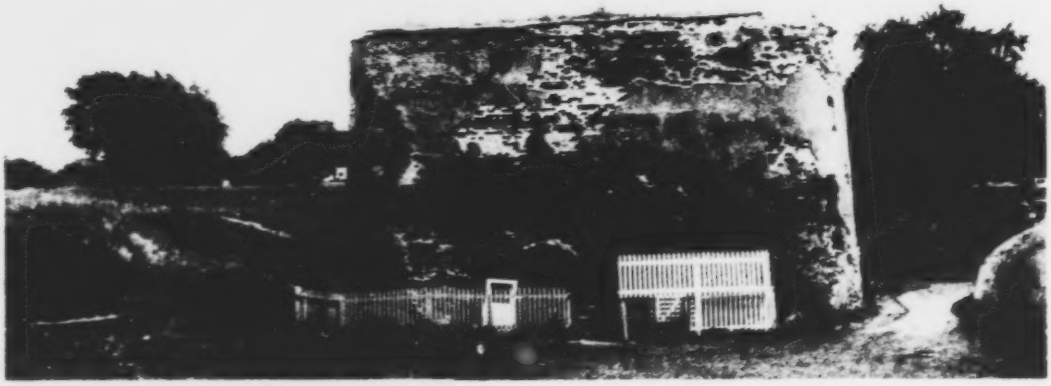
36 Fort Mississauga (ca. 1920).
"Fort Mississauga, built 1814." From a photograph taken about 1920. (Public Archives Canada, C-10093.)
The roof with the dormer windows was added shortly after the turn of the century as a result of a grant obtained from the federal government. A cement parging was added in 1915 and some of the bricks were replaced. The sunken outline of the barracks building and officers' quarters can be seen at the base of the rampart to the lower right of the photograph. Also on the right is a small section of the sally port and to the left of the tower is the main gate and one of the magazines. The large building in the distance is the Chatauqua House. Golf was first played on the Mississauga reserve in the late 1870s. The first golf club in the town was connected with an 18-hole course on the other side of the town at the Fort George Military Reserve. A second club, formed in 1905 by a group connected with the Queen's Royal Hotel, built a nine-hole golf course on the Mississauga Reserve. In 1912 the two clubs united and golf at the Fort George course came to an end. Golf is still being played on the Mississauga site.

37 Fort Mississauga (1922). The main gate of Fort Mississauga. A photograph taken in June 1922. (National Historic Parks and Sites Branch.) Note that the cement has already begun to deteriorate.

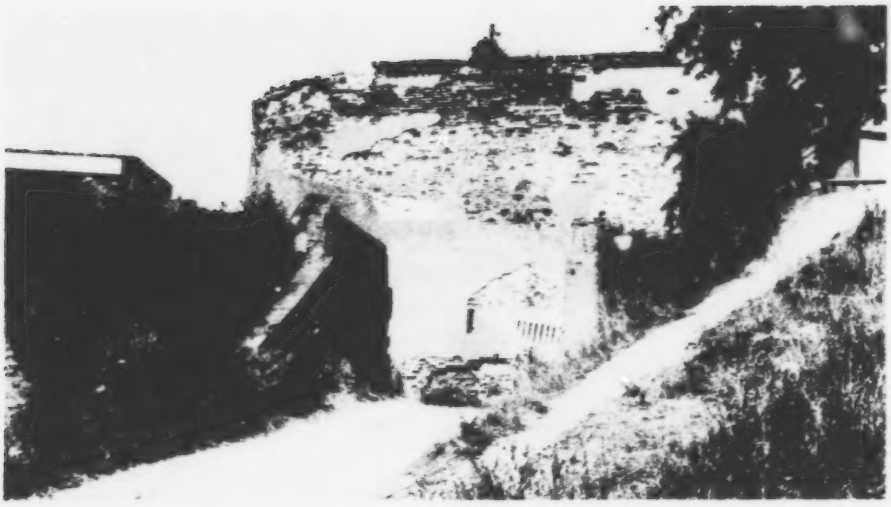


38 Fort Mississauga (1922). Fort Mississauga interior. A photograph taken in June 1922. (National Historic Parks and Sites Branch.) The deterioration of the parging on the tower is especially evident in this view. The sunken outlines of the barracks and officers' quarters are also quite clear. At the bottom left corner a slight outline of the soldiers' barracks can be seen.

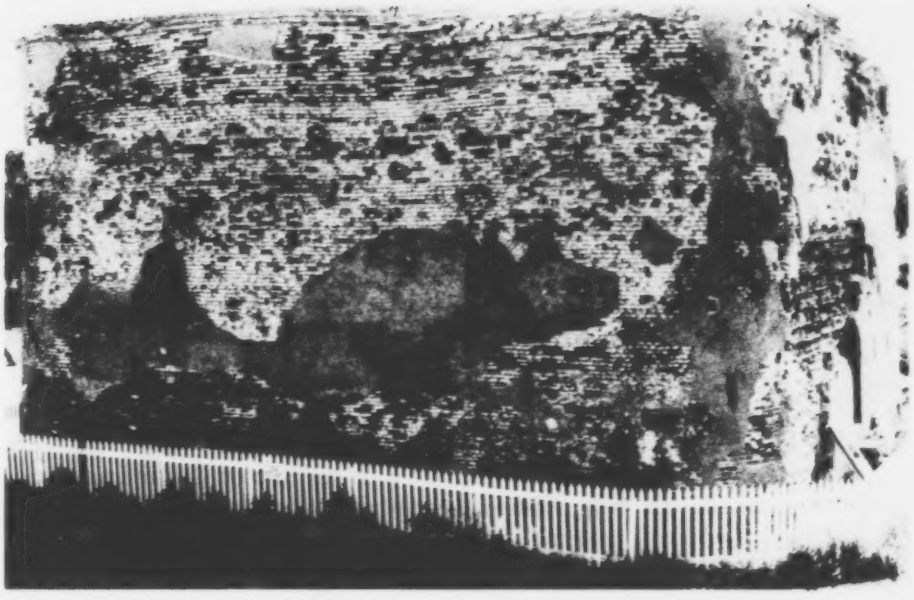
39 Fort Mississauga (1922). The shoreline below the works at Fort Mississauga. A photograph taken in June 1922. (National Historic Parks and Sites Branch.)



40 Fort Mississauga (1966). The northwest wall of the tower at Fort Mississauga. A photograph taken in May 1966. (National Historic Parks and Sites Branch.)
The damage to the parging can be seen quite clearly. The picket fence was built in 1960 to protect visitors and golfers from falling bricks.

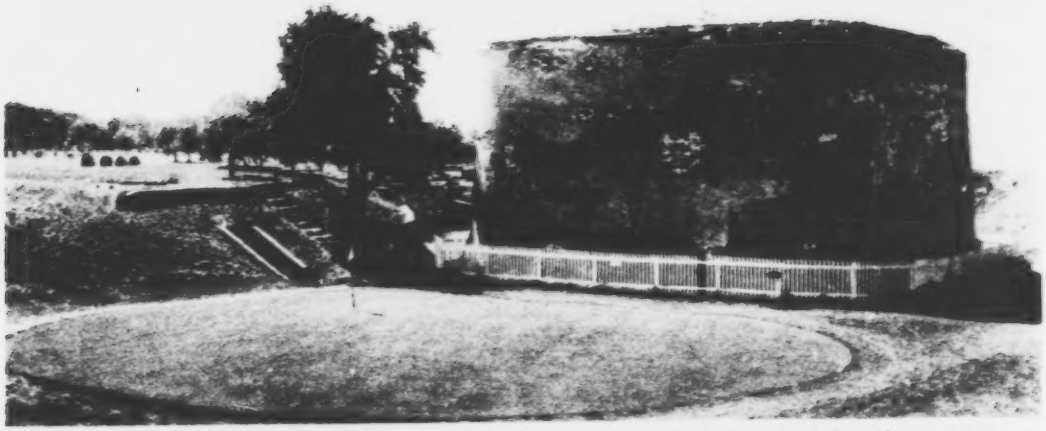


41 Fort Mississauga (1966). The main entrance of Fort Mississauga and the southwest wall of the tower. A photograph taken in May 1966. (National Historic Parks and Sites Branch.)
Compare this to a similar view taken in June 1922 (see Fig. 37). By 1966 much of the parging and brick work had fallen off and the gate had also fallen off its hinges.

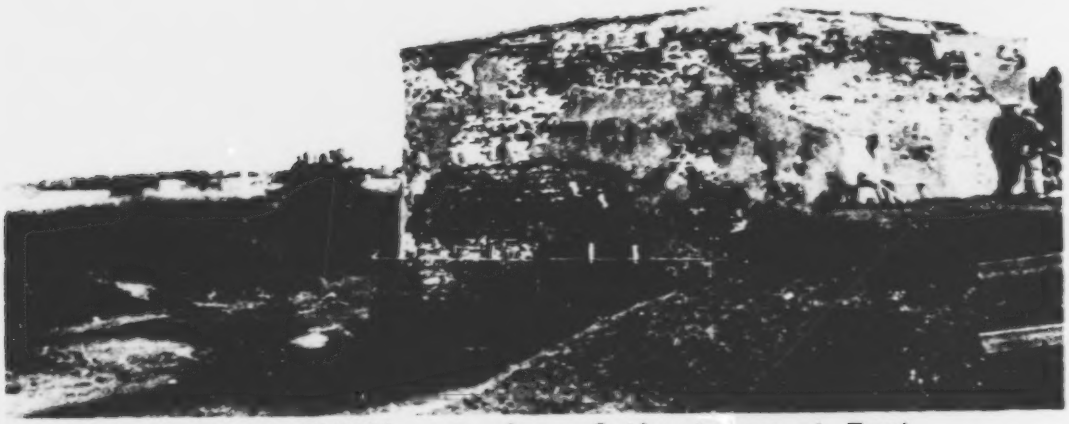


42 Fort Mississauga (1966).
The northeast wall of the tower. A photograph taken in May 1966. (National Historic Parks and Sites Branch.) The plaque on the tower wall (just above the top of the fence) was erected 17 September 1931 by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. The inscription reads:

FORT MISSISSAUGA
Built by military labour in 1814 for the defence of this frontier and the security of the Niagara River as a port of refuge and base for naval operations on Lake Ontario, and named from the point on which it stands. Occupied as a military post until 1845.



43 Fort Mississauga (1966). The interior of Fort Mississauga. A photograph taken in May 1966. (National Historic Parks and Sites Branch.)



44 Fort Mississauga (1969). A view of the tower at Fort Mississauga with Fort Niagara in the distance. A photograph taken in September 1969. (National Historic Parks and Sites Branch.)
Compare this to Bainbrigge's sketch of 1840 and the woodcut by Lossing in 1860 (see Figs. 23 and 25).

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